Sent to R. R. L. 9/10/30

REFERENCE LIBRARY OF
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
2 PARK STREET, BOSTON

NOT TO BE TAKEN FROM THE SHELVES
EXCEPT BY PERMISSION OF
THE LIBRARIAN

REFERENCE LIBRARY * HOUGHTON MIFFLIN CO. * BOSTON, MASS.
Archive
Collection
This book may not leave the Offices
and if borrowed must be returned within 7 days

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN CO.
TRADE
REFERENCE
LIBRARY
1
Please Return To:
2 Park Street, Boston, Mass., U.S.A.

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2026 with funding from
Boston Public Library

https://archive.org/details/appealtolife00mung_0

Theodore T. Munger, D. D.

ESSAYS FOR THE DAY. Crown 8vo, $1.00 *net*. Postage extra.

HORACE BUSHNELL: Preacher and Theologian. With two Portraits. Crown 8vo, gilt top, $2.00.

THE FREEDOM OF FAITH. A volume of Sermons, with an Essay on "The New Theology." Crown 8vo, $1.50.

THE APPEAL TO LIFE. Sermons. 16mo, $1.50.

LAMPS AND PATHS. Sermons to Children. Crown 8vo, $1.00.

ON THE THRESHOLD. Familiar Lectures to Young People. Crown 8vo, $1.00.

The same, in *Cambridge Classics*. Crown 8vo, gilt top, $1.00.

HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN & CO.

BOSTON AND NEW YORK.

THE APPEAL TO LIFE

BY

THEODORE T. MUNGER

AUTHOR OF "THE FREEDOM OF FAITH"

Who lifts his thought to God will never sink
Far 'neath the level of what he dares to think
GOETHE

BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN AND COMPANY
The Riverside Press, Cambridge

Copyright, 1887,
By THEODORE T. MUNGER.

All rights reserved.

Dedicated

TO

THE MEMORY OF TWO FRIENDS,

ELIZABETH DUNCAN MUNGER

AND

ELISHA MULFORD,

ONE THE DEAREST AND IN THE DEAREST RELATION;

THE OTHER THE FRIEND OF MY MIND AS WELL AS MY HEART

BOTH HAVE PASSED ON,

SINCE THESE PAGES WERE BEGUN,

INTO THE PRESENCE OF HIM WHOM THEY SERVED AND LOVED

WHILE THEY WERE UPON THE EARTH.

PREFACE.

THE title of this volume indicates its purpose to set forth the truths to which it refers in the direct light of human life and common experience.

The pulpit is now nearly the only field of thought and instruction not dominated by the inductive method. It is natural that such should be the case, because the fact of an authoritative revelation has been regarded as obviating the necessity of a close scrutiny and analysis of the facts among which it has play. But the prevalent and growing conception of God as immanent in the world and in human life sends us to these fields for the vindication and illustration of the revelation, so that the pulpit is slowly becoming aware that it must think in harmony with other departments of thought and study. The advantage of this is evident, for men cannot have two equally authoritative methods of thought; and it is not well to invite them to think in one way on Sunday and in another way on week-days: the method that prevails for the most will prevail

throughout, and effort to induce another will not only work at cross purpose but result in unreality and failure.

There are three general ways in which the Gospel is presented: the dogmatic way, which interprets the revelation through credal forms accepted as full and ultimate; a simple repetition of the single revelation contained in the Bible without the inter-relation of its truths, and with an implication of faith that deprecates thought and requires only arbitrary acceptance; and a third way that may be called the *vital way*, — that is, truth set in the light of daily life and the real processes of human society. It is not averse to dogma; it accepts with docility the revelation, but it seeks for the vindication and illustration of the truth in the actual life of the world, on the ground that the revelation is through and in this life. It is, in brief, the inductive method.

The first two methods are in violent contrast, yet are largely used in the same pulpits. The acceptance of a series of dogmas saturated with the metaphysic of the age in which they were formulated, and simply buttressed by texts selected in an uncritical day, is the absolute reverse of the simple text-reading and text-matching now so common; but the two methods are often united, — induced perhaps by an unconscious feeling that the weakness of one supplements

that of the other. When persecuted in the city of dogma, the preacher flies into the village of texts, and so back and forth from fortress to open country. But two faulty methods do not make a sound one.

These two methods are entrenched in sentiments that are not only to be respected but maintained. Dogma grows out of thought, and is the result of an instinctive demand for order and consistency. Man is a scientific being, and he cannot easily resist or limit his disposition to formulate knowledge and define its principle. Perhaps he has no higher critical service to perform than to decide where to cease formulating, and when to refrain from pushing theories beyond the bounds of knowledge.

The other sentiment is even more to be respected, — the reverent and docile respect for divine revelation. Of this there cannot be too much, but it can be infused with intelligence and made an ally instead of a supplanter of thought, as is so often the case.

The third method does not reject dogma, but regards it as subservient, — subject to growth, to increase of knowledge, as always incomplete, as liable at any time to be justly set aside, and at all times to be held subordinate to the universal laws of humanity. Nor does it regard with indifference the docile, child-like acceptance of the revealed Word, but it does not forget that a temper of mind is not to be

confounded with an exercise of thought, and that to be like a child is not to cease to be a man. To know and match texts and so infer a truth, may seem docile and reverent, but it has its analogy in the childish task of arranging the parts of a dissected map and so discovering a country, — a good method until another is grown to.

The method we advocate will entertain dogma; it does not hesitate to generalize truth, but it insists that the generalization shall be an induction from the whole revelation of God, and chiefly from the revelation in humanity regarded as inclusive of the Christ. It holds to this because it believes that the Word came by inspiration through humanity and by the processes of human life and the actual life of its Head. The interpretation of the Word must be according to its method. Hence it searches and reads life as it goes on in the world, in history, in the family, and in the nation. The truth it finds here, it finds to be the revealed Word of God. When so discovered, it is felt to be truth; it takes on reality, and is full of commanding power. The thing that man is always requiring is that he shall be explained to himself: tell me what life means, show God to me in human life and I will believe on him. The Incarnation is the answer to this instinctive demand. Christ is God explaining

man, interpreting life, revealing its history and destiny. Hence he is not only in human life, but he teaches in no other way than by its processes. His actual life *is* the teaching, and his words are only comments upon it; the words are not the teaching.

The reason Christ was said to speak with authority was that he avoided the traditional and common method of rehearsing the mere words of the law and the prophets and the formulated opinions of eminent teachers, and made an independent and direct appeal to the minds of his hearers. He did so, indeed, on his own responsibility and so as by authority, but the effectiveness of his teaching lay in the fact that it put itself in immediate connection with the moral and spiritual nature of man. The traditional, the dogmatic, the formal were set aside, and his Word was laid close to the human heart — mind to mind and nothing between. What Christ knew as absolute truth, man is capable of knowing as such when it is heard. Indeed, Christ's direct, intuitive knowledge of it is the pledge of man's ability to receive it in the same way and with something of the same sense of reality. Christ did not rely upon the origin of truth for its effect, nor upon his divine commission, but upon the fitness of the truth to lay direct and powerful hold upon the nature of man. His words were given him of the Father, and he was

sent from the Father to utter them, but their final efficiency consisted in the absolute appeal they made to man's moral nature; there and so acting, they became divine truth and able to save. His method, therefore, was the reverse of the dogmatic, and also of what may be termed the implicit acceptance of the revealed Word, — believed simply because it is revealed. Truth is not actually truth until it gets past the respect properly entertained for dogma, and beyond reverence for an external revelation, and awakens an intelligent and responsive consciousness of its reality; it does not actually reach the man until then, and all previous action is unreal or merely disciplinary, useful indeed, but partial and without full spiritual power. Hence Christ, in his teaching, strove to start into action all the native sentiments and instincts in which human nature is grounded, casting himself in absolute confidence upon the fact that because men are the children of God they are ready each one for himself to hear his Word. Hence he approached them directly and through their experiences and occupations and the things they best knew, because that was the shortest path to these sentiments and instincts. If he can interpret a shepherd to himself as he seeks a lost sheep, he can easily make him understand God seeking lost men; the truth of God immediately allies itself with the truth of the shepherd.

These distinctions may seem slight but they are fundamental. They enter into and underlie the later and better habits of thoughts which are now finding expression in many pulpits. If we do not find the illustration and vindication of the Faith in the heart and life of humanity, we shall find it nowhere. If we can interpret the human heart as it feels and hopes and strives in the natural relations of life; if we can measure the play of the human mind in the family, in society, and in the nation, — we shall find both the field of the Gospel and its vindication. The thing to be done at present is not to crowd upon men a system conceived in some way to be true, nor to bind them down to a hard, literal, undiscerning reception of texts, but to set forth the identity of the Faith with the action of man's nature in the natural relations of life; to show that the truth of God is also the truth of man. This is the central meaning of the Incarnation, and preaching should be the exposition of it.

The first ten sermons in this volume are efforts in this direction, offered with a painful sense of their failure to meet the ideal purpose.

I hardly need to say that the last four discourses were not written to be preached, yet are included as not out of unity with those before them, but more specially to meet the needs of a vast number who are

asking if they can think under the principle of evolution and also as Christian believers. The necessity of showing the possibility of this is my only reason for including them, with the hope that they may be the precursors of far better efforts by others in the same direction, — the most imperative work now pressing upon religious teachers who are able to discern the signs of the times, and who would serve their day and generation.

CONTENTS.

The Witness from Experience 1
Christ's Treatment of Unwilling Skeptics . . 25
Truth through and by Life 45
Life not Vanity 65
The Gospel of the Body 85
The Defeat of Life 107
The Two Prayers of Job 127
Trust and Righteousness 147
The Twofold Force in Salvation 167
Faith Essential Righteousness 185
Evolution and the Faith 207
Immortality and Modern Thought 245
Man the Final Form in Creation 281
Music as Revelation 307

THE WITNESS FROM EXPERIENCE

"Christianity is not a theory or a speculation, but a life; — not a philosophy of life, but a life and a living process." — COLERIDGE.

"The Christian religion is a mighty lever, by the help of which degraded and suffering humanity has again and again been strengthened to lift itself out of the mire; and by allowing it the possession of this great moral efficiency, we place it on a platform higher than all philosophy, and where, indeed, for the manifestation of its highest virtue no philosophy is required." — GOETHE.

THE WITNESS FROM EXPERIENCE.

Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him, etc. — St. Luke xv. 1–11.

If we had been present when these parables were spoken, we should have witnessed at least a scene of keen intellectual interest. For, first of all, these parables are an intellectual combat, an answer to criticism, and the answer has all the robust force that any great logician would throw into his argument. There is nothing mystical, nothing rhapsodical, nothing sentimental, nothing outside the ordinary experience of men. On the contrary, these parables get their force because they rest so squarely and broadly on the every-day feelings and experiences of ordinary men. They are apologetic and they are didactic; that is, they are a personal defense by Christ of himself and his work, and they also enforce great truths of duty. They are local and they are universal; that is, they met the criticism of the hour, and they also teach universal lessons of pity and helpfulness, and link the lowly duty of earth with the joy of the heavenly order.

The scene must have had a thrilling interest to one capable of appreciating how a great spirit meets his opponents. A crowd of publicans flock about

Christ, tax-gatherers, some of whom may be honest at heart, and capable of becoming good men under better circumstances, for no class of men is wholly bad; there will be many exceptions and many more with redeeming qualities. Other sinners also are about him: slaves of vice, good-for-nothings in the common estimate; men and women who wear the brand of evil without protest, but not therefore hopeless in the discerning judgment of Heaven, for this class are quite as much victims of an imperfect social system as originators of sin. If the body of society is not pure and well composed, there will be a sediment and a scum; and the fault is not in any one part, but in the whole mass. Imperfect human society is always precipitating its faults, mistakes, ignorance, injustice, and greed, and the result is the degradation, brutality, and gross vice of the lower classes, and the follies, corruption, and hard selfishness of the rich, — the extremes meeting and mingling into one in the discerning eye of the all-seeing Judge. Christ felt the force of these excuses, and saw the redeeming, or rather redeemable, qualities that lay beneath this outer crust of repelling wickedness. Hence he did not repulse this crowd when it flocked about him, drawn simply because he did not repel, but had dropped some kind word which their outcast hearts had caught at by unquenchable instinct. They were drawn also by something stronger than a chance word. If the main characteristic of Christ were reduced to one phrase, it would be, — a passion for saving the lost. He is indeed a shepherd leading his whole flock in green

pastures and by still waters; he guides the whole family of man in right ways, and feeds society with the bread of life, and lights every man born into the world on the path to eternal life; but when any class or any man gets lost, — lost to God and to humanity and to himself, — then the passion of his nature is aroused; then the flame of his love bursts out; then the wrath of the Son of Man is kindled against the evil that can so blast a fellow-man; then the Lamb of God is ready to die to save a brother-man who is lost. When one indulges a passion like this, the objects of it are not long in finding it out. Let him raise his standard anywhere, and they will flock to it, for there are affinities not only of likes but of opposites; needs as well as desires draw men, and the instinct of the soul for what is highest and strongest and best never wholly dies out.

There are also hovering about him another class: Pharisees and Scribes, critics with notions of their own in regard to all things in earth and heaven, professional theologians and sociologists, theorists who have sunk man in disquisitions about man, and religion in schemes of religion; who have speculated and refined upon religion until they have lost sight of its great universal features, and so, at last, have even reversed it, turning its mercy and love and deliverance into mere forms of observance and ritual, straining out gnats of heresy and swallowing camels of broken eternal law, — a process that finally transforms them so that they become cold and bloodless haters and despisers of their fellow-men. And yet they were very respectable men:

they sat in Moses's seat, and discussed their theology under the name of "the Law" day after day; they published in their way defenses of what they deemed the historic faith, and kept a close, rebuking eye upon any who differed from them. These men were about Christ, for this Christ is quoting Moses and telling the people what the Law actually means. They do not ask, "Does he quote Moses fairly; does he describe the faith as it is?" but, "Does he agree with us; is he in accord with present belief?"

Now it did not fall in with Christ's method to pass by these men in silence, uttering simply his own views, and suffering theirs to pass unchallenged. For when a false teacher is entrenched in long-cherished religious traditions and wears a garb of outward sanctity, his influence over the common people is well-nigh irresistible, and it needs to be broken up not only by the counter, positive truth, but by an exposure of the false grounds on which it rests. These parables, therefore, are an attack as well as a teaching; they are a defense as well as a message. Still, there is no personal hate in them; perhaps some of these Pharisees themselves will feel their force. His words flame with divine indignation, but it is the still heat of a sun; his emotions are deep, but their expression is like the wheels in Dante's vision, that seemed to sleep on their axles from the very swiftness of their turning. These critics who are complaining around Christ are guilty of the one deadly sin, — inhumanity; they have reversed the law of human society, and have come

to hate a man because he is wicked, and to despise him because he is low. This is contrary to Moses, but Christ does not quote Moses, for they have turned his words into a creed of their own that reads quite differently; nor does he now affirm on his own authority. Christ indeed so spoke, but it was not an authority that shut out all use of reason, that ignored the motions of the human heart and the every-day thought of men; his authority was grounded in these, and it got its force from his absolute knowledge of these things, and not from the far-off secrets of some distant heaven. His authority lay in his absolute exposure of the human heart to itself and a like revelation of God's heart. He appeals instead to the daily experience of the people about them, to the way in which shepherds and housewives and fathers everywhere acted and felt. The argument from every-day life and natural feeling is irresistible. Show a man that his theory, however fine and otherwise well supported, does not tally with the common thought and instinctive habits and feelings of men, and he is silenced; nature cannot be pitched out with any sort of a theoretical or argumentative fork.

And so we have three parables saying nearly the same thing, all turning on something lost, one piled on another without reason except to overwhelm his critics under an accumulation of every-day truth. The commentators find a variety of thoughts in them; there is instead one thought intensified by repetition. You accuse me of taking an interest in lost men, of eating and drinking with them; you

deem me fanatical because I love them; you take satisfaction in thanking God that you are not as these publicans; I find joy in saving them. They are indeed lost, but what do men do, how do they feel, when they have lost anything, no matter how small its value may be? Take one of your own shepherds: he has a hundred sheep — a large flock, but one gets lost, wanders away in its silly fashion, tears its fleece and leaves it on the thorns, grows hungry and lean in the rocky defiles, gets wild and unlike itself in its strange and danger-haunted life, a lost and nearly valueless sheep, hard to find and of small worth when found, but it is lost, — what does the shepherd do in such a case? Does he not leave the flock, perhaps neglect it somewhat, turn it over to some one else, and go after the one that is lost, and seek for it till he finds it? Do not all the habits and instincts of a shepherd lead him to do this? And how is it with housewives in their dark cottages when they have lost a piece of money? Do they not light a lamp and sweep the house in all its four corners, till they find it? And how is it with fathers whose sons stray away into the evil world, and waste their property in debauchery, and come to shame and wretchedness, like these sinners about us? Do they not wait and hope and pray that they may come to themselves and at last return? And when that happens, do not the fathers, would not you if you are still human, rejoice, and receive them with open arms and feasting? Now I tell you that I am not acting in any unusual or unnatural way. I am merely doing what any person does who properly

fulfills a true relation; what any shepherd worthy of the name, any prudent housewife, any real father, would do, when they have lost sheep, or money, or sons. I have human nature on my side; I stand with those who fill their places in the every-day work of the world, and who act out of unperverted natural instinct. If you criticise me, you criticise habits that all men approve; you array yourselves against the natural emotions that every day sweep through the hearts of all these people; you deny the reality of the strongest affection of the human heart, — a father's love for his son. I told you long ago that I am a physician striving to heal the sick; now I tell you that I am a shepherd seeking the lost sheep of our common nation; and in fulfilling these relations I am led by the same motives that actuate every-day people in the every-day occupations of life.

As an answer, nothing could be more conclusive or more crushing. There was not a shepherd who had that day strayed down from the hills, not a housewife who had stolen a moment from her cares to hear the words of this new prophet, not a father who had grieved over a wayward son, not a man or woman who had ever lost anything and found it, but triumphed in the argument that had its vindication in their own bosoms.

And here, my friends, is where all the words of Christ are proved true. It is here, in the daily experience of honest occupations, in the emotions that rise out of the common events of life, in the history of the human heart as it loses and finds, that the Gospel has its confirmation. For the Gospel has

no method peculiar to itself; it is not an alien in the world of thought; it is not the secret of some new order suddenly revealed. Its method is that of human nature, which is also the divine nature; the Son of God is also the Son of Man; in his own image made he man; the love of God is not different from the love of man, and the justice of God is not unlike that which springs instinctive out of the hearts of all men. The action of reason in his mind is the same as that by which we guide ourselves, for we are his image; it is absolute, but the absolute is not essentially different from the relative. The gravitation that governs a pebble thrown into the air is the same force that guides Arcturus, and makes fast the bands of Orion, and binds together in sweet influence the whole universe of worlds. The fires that glow on our hearths and the flames that mingle in our laboratories are the same that leap from the face of the most distant sun. The universe is a unit, perhaps an essence; and as the thought of God impregnates in all material things, so is it wrought into all minds, — all set to laws of righteousness, all keyed to the same emotions, all centrally grounded in eternal love that is eternal joy. The limitation and defect and perversion of these constitute evil, but back of the evil and in spite of it is the common current of thought and feeling that issues from the mind of God and sweeps through humanity. The shepherd seeking a lost sheep is God saving a world. A woman rejoicing over her found money is the joy of God and angels over repenting sinners. Anthropomorphism

has been regarded as the product of a simple and superstitious age, but we are coming back — led by philosophy on one side and by science on the other — to something like this same old conception; for there is no better conception of God than as a Being who contains within himself an eternal humanity. We are finding out that we cannot otherwise escape dualism, nor have a cosmos in the material world and a revelation in the moral world. For a revelation must have its basis and its method in a common nature and in common processes of thought and feeling; otherwise there are no avenues and no receptivity. Thus we know the revelation and determine its reality, not by signs wrought, but by its accord with the general laws of our being and the instinctive feelings of our nature as they come out in the natural relations of life. We do not thus set ourselves over a revelation to determine it, but we put it beside human nature to see if it tallies with it, if it says the same thing, if the molten metal of inspired truth fills the human mould, if the deep without calls to the deep within and is keyed to the same eternal note. Still, call it a test if you will; the human mind, in its brave, early day, did not hesitate to claim that God doubled his oath before doubting men, that they might have a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul. There is no dishonor in undergoing a test. "Believe me for my works," says the Christ. Or, if there were a humbling of himself in it, it is that humility which is itself glory; God stoops to get on the level of our doubting, questioning hearts, — hearts that must question and doubt

because we have not yet come to the world where there is no night. The shadows are almost as heavy as the substance, and there are many voices around and within us crying Lo here! and Lo there! But when the glowing metal of revealed truth finds its way into every crevice of the human mould, then we know the one was made for the other. When God's voice starts into vibration every string of my nature, then I know it is God's voice. And so Christ laid his finger on the hearts about him, — the shepherds, the housewives, the fathers, men who sowed and reaped, and toiled in vineyards, and fished in waters, and made feasts, and attended weddings, and showed them that his truth was their truth. Revelation is not a set of orders issued as by a captain or pilot on the deck of a ship: it is the Spirit taking the things of Christ and showing them unto us; it is the appeal of the divine mind to the human on the basis that one is the image of the other.

But apology and defense are a small part of Christ's aim in the parable. It is true that the Pharisee, like the poor, is always with us; he stands, not for a temporary class, but for a spirit that is always springing out of human selfishness when fed by prosperity and endowed with power. The Pharisee of Christ's day was a religious bigot, but the thing in him that stirred the Christly wrath was his inhumanity, beside which bigotry is a simple thing. The Pharisee of to-day is the Sadducee who believes neither in angel nor spirit, but only in a force that helps the strong and destroys the weak; he is the pessimist who finds no good or hope of good in the

world, and so eats and drinks till to-morrow lights him to dusty death; he is the monopolist who fills his barns while God's poor starve; he is the rich man who will not touch with one of his fingers the burdens of vice and ignorance and poverty that rest on his fellow-man; he is the prudent, calculating, persistent builder-up of his own fortune in ways externally fair, but lets every other man go his own way, helps no public enterprise, takes part in no work that does not contribute to his gains; he is the man of cold blood and narrow vision and hard sense, a quoter of prudential maxims, one who believes that the sunlight and the dew and the rain are for the just, and not also for the unjust. And the Scribes are also with us: men who propound the opinions and habits of the modern Pharisee as theories and write them out in books, *laissez-faire* economists; naturalists and sociologists who describe a section of the world and call it a philosophy of the universe; positivists who, by denying the eternal and slighting the moral, drive men back into the cave of present self-interest; and lecturers who overlook brothels to sneer at churches. Yes, the Pharisee and the Scribe are with us still, and their loud murmuring is not to be passed by. It is well to show them that they contradict the instincts of the human heart and the principles that spontaneously direct men in the natural relations of human life. Still, this is a small part of the work of a teacher of men. The bread of life is positive; the thing that *is*, is the truth that feeds and nerves and inspires. It is because Christ was so immensely and overwhelmingly

positive that he could afford at times to turn on his critics, and hurl at them the denial of our common nature. But your denier, your man with only a negative proposition, whether he stand alone or within a church, denying the Trinity, denying future punishment, denying the validity of the sacraments, — such a teacher finds himself surrounded by a lean and hungry flock that may, for a time, look up expecting to be fed, but at last fall away, some straying back into pasture and others into the wilderness. He who gives himself up to denials and negations reduces himself to their level, and becomes himself a negation, a silence when men are calling for a voice, a darkness when they are crying for a light. It matters little whether the thing denied be true or false; denial is not what we want. We are all in error more or less; we know it well enough. We are groping in a dimly-lighted world, grasping at substance and finding it shadow, casting ourselves upon shadows to find that we have dashed our heads against substance; what we most want is light. And so this parable mainly has for its end to show that the saving of lost men belongs properly to the business of the world, and is a main concern with it; that it is justified by the common thought of men, and that it is linked with those economic and moral instincts that form the basis of social life. The Scribes may not understand me, but the shepherds do.

Now let us look more closely into the principle that Christ puts under his passion for saving lost men.

He does not by any means say that any faithful shepherd, any prudent housewife, will take an interest in lost men, but only that the principle at the bottom of their conduct and emotions are similar, like forces and currents in our common nature. This principle is the peculiar joy we feel in finding things lost. To get possession of a thing we never had yields a certain satisfaction, but to regain a thing lost stirs a deeper and keener feeling. To lose a thing, of however small value and in whatever way, vexes us; we reflect on ourselves with shame and blame, and we strive harder to find it than to secure something else of more worth. Not another sheep, but the one lost, not earning another coin, but finding the identical one I lost: in this we have the voice of a sound and hearty nature. Such a search piques the curiosity, — a sport in childhood and a purpose throughout life. To find a hidden thing is the mind matching itself against nature; to find a lost thing is the triumph of mind over nature when it has eluded us. It involves also the conscience; we feel responsible for that which is our own, or rather is not our own, but is entrusted to us, and for that very reason to be accounted for at some bar. You say; I may do what I choose with mine own, — drop this coin into the sea. You might if it were your own, but because it is not absolutely yours you may not cast it away. It is the instinctive sense of stewardship that sets us to searching for what we have lost; it must be accounted for at the bar of conscience, which is also the bar of God. To lightly lose a thing, and care lightly for the loss, argues a

shallow and immoral nature. He who heedlessly parts with anything that truly belongs to him does not hold himself at true value, but is a loose-girded, ill-containing being who wastes at last the very elements of his selfhood. It is such a principle that lies back of Christ's passion, deep seated in human nature and in the divine nature. But he carries it much farther. In his quest for lost men, he is searching not only for a value lost out of the riches of the Father, not simply to keep the flock whole, but to restore to the lost man himself the riches he has wasted. For a lost man is chiefly lost to himself. It is not possible for those to suffer so much from the wandering away of one dear to them into sin as the one himself. For awhile the father suffers more than his prodigal boy, but time and use dull the pangs of one and sharpen those of the other. Here is where Christ's work of saving lost men rises above the analogies of instinctive nature and habit, and enters the world of morals. It is his love for man, his pity for the misery of a man lost, his sense of the wrong when a man throws himself away, his perfect sense of the joy wasted, and his even keener sense of the ever-deepening wretchedness of an evil-doer; his sympathy, so perfect that he feels the full measure of what another feels, and so bears on his own heart all the woe of humanity, and treats as his own all this poverty and hunger of sin, — here is the spring of Christ's passion for saving lost men.

The parable turns in its last analysis upon the union of consciousness which exists between a true shepherd and his sheep. By living with his flock in

the long intimacy of years and by constant care, he passes the wide boundary of their diverse natures and comes to know how a sheep feels; he not only loves but he understands it; and when it is lost his shepherd's heart goes after it in its strange loneliness, pities its fear as it hears the howl of the wolf, feels the weariness of the poor creature as it wanders aimless over fell and moor, bleating for its companions. Ah, tender and true picture of this poor world lost in evil and sought by its Shepherd! It is Christ's absolute consciousness of lost humanity that makes him its seeking Saviour.

These are weighty lessons for us. It is the first duty of a man in the world to see things as they are; it is the highest achievement of the intellect to rightly measure and weigh the condition of humanity. We understand quite well the loss of a sheep, — a fleece of wool and a carcass of mutton. Money lost, — that is a common and bitter enough experience. Waste, — there are enough to decry it: political economists running up and down the land telling us how to save here and gain there, how to get the greatest number of dollars into the largest number of pockets, — all of which is quite well. But how is it about lost men, wasted energies, faculties weakened by drink, minds sealed up in ignorance, hearts vacant of joy, whole classes lost in vice, whole flocks scattered in the wilderness of evil, and no shepherd to pity and seek them? It is the strange thing in the world that man cares so little for man. Man is the only jewel; there is no true gold but him on this planet. Why does man pass by

man and go after something that glitters, or stretches wide, or reaches high? We cannot tell. It is not natural, it is contrary to nature, — a perversion, a blindness or dimness of yet unformed vision, the blunder and stumble of a race not yet come to the full exercise of its proper humanity. It is because Christ saw man at his true value and died to give expression to his estimate that we name him the Humanity itself; he is man rightly weighing man. And so the struggle of Christ in history is to bring men up to the point of duly valuing their fellow-men. We have no debt but to love one another. There is no passion worthy of us but the passion for humanity. It has been a weary work to start this flame in the heart of the world. It was kindled in the fires of the death of the Son of Man; it spread mightily so long as the breath of the Spirit had access to it, but government, and philosophy, and greed, and custom "heavy as frost, and deep almost as life," first embraced and then smothered it; each added to it something of itself, and so it became a thing of authority and scholasticism and tradition, — its simple, natural humanity overborne and well-nigh lost to it. Now at last it seems to be emerging, and to be gaining recognition not only in the practical Christian conscience but in theology. And here indeed is a sea deep and wide enough to float whole bodies of divinity. It is a theology, a philosophy, a social science; it is the secret of the order of the world. This passion for humanity, hindered as it has been, is still the only force that has ever done anything towards radically curing the wrongs

of the masses. It has nearly driven out the tyranny of king and class; it has yet to harmonize the relations between the poor and the rich, between the laborer and the employer, — a task in which it will be hindered by communism and socialism; for while the Shepherd of humanity is seeking his lost sheep he encounters wolves in sheep's clothing. The greatest impediments to Christianity are those sporadic forms of benevolence that seek similar ends, yet are without its spirit, its methods, and its wisdom. But at last it will triumph over these, for the lost sheep will be sought till it is found. It will at last teach men that they are brethren. Slowly but surely this eternal truth is finding its way into society. This dear nation of ours is organized under this conception, — a land of equal laws. To reduce society in its social and economic relations to the same complexion is the task before it. The thought is becoming familiar to men, and is subduing all things — laws, customs, commerce, business — to its own temper.

The parable, in its main drift, sends us each and all to the work of delivering the fallen and oppressed children of humanity. The whole need not a physician; they may be left to the orderly forces of nature and grace that enfold them; they incite us to wise and prudent care, they do not stir us into a divine passion. But these poverty-stricken ones: the children that grow pale in tenement houses; the victims of drink; the women driven to vice by the cruelty of rapacious employers; the multitudes who toil on railways, stripped bare of the

saving ties of home and social life; the churchless masses in the West, the unchurched masses in the East; the illiterate of all sections; the sinners, the touch of whose garments we shun as we walk the streets, — these are the lost sheep that we are to seek.

It is not an easy task. Great passions move in an atmosphere of cost and suffering, but along with the suffering there is a joy. We do not sound the depth of this parable until we master this feature of it. It is significant that these parables end in joy, — social joy, for there is no other. Two main thoughts run through them: a suffering search for that which is lost, a recompensing joy when it is found. Christ is careful not to omit the latter. An immense amount of far-drawn and fanciful analogy is often associated with them that only hides the sense, and were better thrown aside. There are indeed some minor suggestions, incidental in their nature, that are of value, but the sole, central truth is that a man who has a proper feeling for humanity will seek after its lost, and when he has recovered a lost one he comes into joy. This is natural, — to be glad when the lost is found, — but Christ expands the field of its action, lifts it up to heaven, and calls in the angels. Whether this is the exulting play of the oriental imagination spiritualizing its visions and throwing into outward form the ecstasies of the inner soul, or a simple revelation of experiences in another world, it is not necessary to decide. For one, I do not care to make the distinction. It is not improbable that the heavenly fact is the basis of

the heavenly vision. But if the distinction were pressed, I would sooner stand with the heaven-seeing enthusiast than with the modern Sadducee. "Count me on the side of the angels." Better a noble faith than a narrow philosophy. Give us open but not empty heavens. Cease to deepen the skies with your lenses, if you cannot also by faith people them. Do not make man solitary in this wide universe by declaring that he alone dwells in it. Do not point us to a sad and sorrow-stricken world, and then break our hearts by the assertion that there is none better. You strive in vain when you tell us that this world of matter which upholds our feet upholds also our spirits. In vain you may tell us that there is a world for our senses, but no world for our thoughts, for our affections, for our spiritual instincts. To the clear eyes of the guileless man the heavens are open, and he sees angels ascending and descending. Such a world enfolds and interpenetrates the visible world, — a spiritual yet a real world, present, at hand, without and within, seen not with eye, nor heard by ear, nor felt by touch, but more substantial and truer than that reported by the nerves; for what the spirit says to itself must be more trustworthy than what is reported by its servants.

The world of spirit, the world of God and angels, is the real world. Life comes from it and reaches up into it; there life culminates; there moral and spiritual processes have their consummation; there God's pity yearns over his lost children; there the angels rejoice when one returns. Now for the use of it.

You and I, my friends, find scant reward in this outward world for any pains and labors we undergo in striving to save lost men. It is not easy to contend against the selfishness of men, to strive for the reform of evils and abuses before it becomes popular. It is not pleasant to see the finger of the proud and the powerful pointed at you in scorn of what they call your fanaticism; if you sympathize with labor, to be named a communist; if you contend against bigotry, to be cast out as a heretic; if you plead for ideals that are high and changes that are radical, to be styled a visionary. Nor is it pleasant to go down into the depths after lost men, to eat and drink with sinners. This close but necessary contact with evil is hard to endure, for the seeking shepherd shares largely in the lot of the lost sheep: if its fleece is torn, so are his garments; if its flesh is bruised, so is he bruised for its silly iniquities; if the blood of its life streams from wounds, so is his raiment stained as he lays it upon his shoulder; if it has strayed away into dank and deadly places, he must breathe the fatal air. There is a great deal of good work to be done in the world that demands no sacrifice, and yields a sufficient reward in the gratitude of society; but this special work of saving the peculiarly lost has no such reward. The passion for humanity is indulged at the cost of suffering, but it is not without its joy. "You eat with sinners," says the Pharisee. "True," says the Christ, "but there is a satisfaction in it beyond and above what you know, — the joy of heaven."

That same heavenly joy flows round this world

still. When duty presses hard, when the faces of men are averted, when labor brings no visible reward, when conscience demands sacrifice, then fly up into the heavenly world and drink the joy that God gives to those who serve him in these ways.

CHRIST'S TREATMENT OF UNWILLING SKEPTICS.

"There are few religious phrases that have had such a power of darkening men's minds as to their true relation to God, as the common phrase that we are here in a state of probation, under trial, as it were. We are not in a state of probation; we are in a process of education, directed by that eternal purpose of love which brought us into being. When we apprehend that we are in a process of education that God will carry to its fulfillment, however long it may take, we feel that the loving purpose of the Father is over us, and that the events of life are not appointed as testing us, whether we will choose God or not, but real lessons into training us to make the right choice." — THOMAS ERSKINE, *Memoirs*, p. 376.

"Whatever is against right reason, that no faith can oblige us to believe. For though reason is not the positive and affirmative measure of our faith, and our faith ought to be larger than reason, and take something into her heart that reason can never take into her eye, yet in all our creed there can be nothing against reason. If reason justly contradicts an article, it is not of the household of faith." — JEREMY TAYLOR.

"Come, my Way, my Truth, my Life:
Such a Way, as gives us breath;
Such a Truth, as ends all strife:
Such a Life, as killeth death.

"Come, my Light, my Feast, my Strength:
Such a Light, as shows a feast:
Such a Feast, as mends in length:
Such a Strength, as makes his guest.

"Come, my Joy, my Love, my Heart:
Such a Joy, as none can move:
Such a Love, as none can part:
Such a Heart, as joyes in Love."

GEORGE HERBERT, *The Call.*

UNWILLING SKEPTICS.

And, behold, two of them were going that very day to a village named Emmaus, which was threescore furlongs from Jerusalem.

And they said one to another, Was not our heart burning within us, while he spoke to us in the way, while he opened to us the scriptures? — St. Luke xxiv. 13–32.

I think no one can read this story carefully without seeing that it is an entirely truthful history down to its minutest particular. One part of it carries the other; the philosophy of it confirms the incident, and the incident is necessary for holding the philosophy; the two play into each other in so easy and natural a way that all suspicion of myth, or late tradition, or fabrication, is shut out. On any other theory than that of historical verity, the meaning would have escaped the form, or the form would not have retained the meaning.

The incident might bear for a title, Christ's treatment of unwilling skeptics. He has not joined these two men merely to show them the fact of his resurrection, and so drive them into a belief of it by a physical process, but to convince them of it by a rational process. He is not with them to assure

them in any way of a bare fact, but to set that fact in all its wide relations and bearings. Hence, he hides himself from their recognition, — how, it is needless to ask; whether through the shades of the far spent day, or in the preoccupation of their sad minds, or in the new form and features of one who has passed under the transforming touch of death and resurrection, it matters not. It is as man with man, mind with mind, that he meets them, and so leads them into the truth he would teach without aid from the prejudice of personal love or the overwhelming influence of enforced evidence. Why do not the heavens open and show us God? Why does not the earth speak and declare his name? Why do not the gates of eternity swing open and disclose the hosts of the blessed dead? Why does not Christ come and spread before us his pierced hands, and offer them to the touch of our unbelief?

Not in such ways is faith wrought. "Blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed." A certain kind of faith may be so induced, but it is not a faith that blesses; it is not a faith that roots itself in the according reason; it is not a faith that rests on the whole order of eternal truth; it is not a faith that brings love and reverence and obedience to a conscious realization through patient exercise of them. For faith is not something to be given, but a result to be achieved by the combined action of the reason, the will, and the heart. And so Christ puts himself far off from these doubting men, and draws nigh to them by the close processes of reason before he lets himself in upon the love and wonder

of their hearts. Thus convinced, they will be persuaded indeed. Seen thus in the light of history, they will surely know that he is the Lamb of God, slain from the foundation of the world. There was evidently in the mind of Christ a steady purpose to prepare the disciples for a large conception of himself for their use in the future. He will not ask it now, while he is with them, but he drops into their minds seeds of revelation that will bear the fruit of a large and invincible faith.

These two men on the way to Emmaus are in a state of mind not strange, nor without parallel in the present. They had a Christ, but they have him no longer. They had hoped he would redeem Israel, but he was crucified, dead, and buried. Every conception of him they had held was thrown into confusion; every hope they had won from him was blighted. The fair dream, woven of his power and goodness and spiritual energy, was dissolved. They were again but Galilean fishermen, with the old Judean skies above them; Pharisees, whom they had been taught to hate, still sat in Moses' seat; the Roman yoke still rested unbroken upon their necks; all things had turned back to the old, dead level of hopeless waiting and vain desire. What could they do but go back to the shores of their sea and fish in its waters, with none to tell them where to cast their nets, to still its waves, to speak the word of life from their boats? We all know what broken and vanished hopes are, and the pains of dissolving happy visions. Who has not waked from some bright dream of sweet fields and soft winds, to hear the storm of

winter beating against the shutter, and the sullen drip of rain upon the sod? Who has not dreamed that the dear dead have come back, to the couch beside us, in the cradle that we touch in the darkness, in the chair by the hearth, and waked to find that "day brings back our night"? And hopes more real than these — day-dreams built out of substantial elements, bright assurances of fortune and happiness and success — have faded away in a moment, leaving us bewildered, smitten in heart and confused in mind, doubting the reality of all things, yet held by some tender forces of our nature; for long after the mind has lost its hold on reality, the heart retains it by some power of its own.

It was so with these two men; their hopes and expectations had been thrown into confusion, but their hearts remained true. They made no charges of imposture; their disappointment turned into no accusations against their dead master; they could understand nothing in the past or present, but they went no farther, held back by love from the harsh verdict that reason might well pronounce. So it was now, but so it would not have continued to be. It is easy to imagine what their future would have been had Christ not appeared and brought their minds into harmony with their hearts. Their affection for him would have languished under a growing sense of his mistake and failure; they would soon have come to regard themselves as deceived men; their pity for him would have turned towards themselves; the memory of his gracious love would have evaporated as time put it at a distance; and so head and heart

having been emptied of faith and love, they would have lapsed back into old-time Jews, with perhaps Sadducean indifference, or bitter hatred of all things.

I speak of their possible experience because it is often an actual experience at present.

Doubt is mostly a modern thing. In earlier times, men believed or disbelieved; they accepted the Christian faith or they denied it. In the Catholic ages, there was little of what is now known as skepticism; there was ignorance and perversion and superstition, but not much of mental perplexity. The reasons are evident: there was no science to raise the questions that seem to antagonize faith; and there was little sense of personality prompting every man to think for himself. Men believed because there was nothing to hinder, and so believed too much, — in relics, in demons, in magic, in priestly power, in almost anything that was required. But when Protestantism, which was simply a movement of intelligence, swept out the superstitions and gave men knowledge, and so awoke independent thought, doubt came in, and the age of skepticism began.

Was it well or ill? It is enough to say that it was inevitable. What is inevitable is God's method, and that must be right and well. Knowledge and personality make doubt possible, but knowledge is also the cure of doubt; and when we get a full and adequate sense of personality we are lifted into a region where doubt is almost impossible, for no man can know himself as he is and all the fullness of his nature without also knowing God.

This doubt has been of two kinds: one belongs to the past, the other is a feature of the present. The earlier was the product of an over-stringent theology; of such doctrines as decrees, obscuring the freedom of the will; limited atonement, teaching that Christ died only for the elect; election, practically setting aside personal character; a limited action of the Holy Spirit; a magical conception of regeneration; a conception of faith as opposed to works; a doctrine of reprobation that turned earth into hell; a conception of life as under probation, and not under grace; and a general, doom-like atmosphere under which men were awed into submission or crushed into despair. It was a theology prolific of doubt. Hardy natures thrived on it in a certain way, but tender, sensitive, reflective minds sank under it into submissive sadness, or cast it from them by natural repulsion.

The doubt sprang from within: I am not one of the elect; I have sinned away my day of grace; I have grieved the Holy Spirit; I am not accepted of God; my sins are not removed; my hope is a delusion of Satan. We have but to read the religious biographies of the last century and the early part of this to find it, and also its cause.

But the theology has mostly passed away, except in form, and with it the form of doubt it was so well fitted to produce. Another kind of doubt has taken the place of the old, doubt that springs from without, a perplexity very like that which troubled these two men on the road to Emmaus. It is a doubt, not of self, but of something outside of self. For,

just now, thought is mainly fixed on the external world. Our poetry is introspective, and a part of our fiction turns on the interplay of our moral and spiritual mechanism, but for the most part the look is outward, and chiefly on the natural world and its order. From thence come our doubts, — doubt of miracle, of the truth of the Bible, of immortality, of the existence of a personal God, of the action of the Holy Spirit, of the reality of a spiritual world; doubt of the soul itself, of the operations of conscience, of accountability, of reward and punishment. The source of these doubts also is plain. We are learning so much about nature and its laws, and of our relations to it, that we are swamped in our knowledge, as a boat is engulfed in breakers when near the shore, — safe when far out on the wide sea, but upset when the waves meet the resistance of another element. It is not spiritual things that set us to doubting, nor yet material things, but the getting caught between the two; and just now the tides of eternal truth are beating hard against the rocks of time and sense, and many are caught and engulfed by their conflicting forces.

This new doubt has more reason in it than the old, and is even more persistent and painful. The old was an illusion, a disease; the new is real, — the antagonism of knowledge with knowledge. It was painful to look into heaven and see only an angry God, but it was better than to see no God at all. It was bitter to think of endless hell, but it was not so sickening as to think of annihilation. It was sad to fear lest the Holy Spirit had passed by, but it was

not so dreadful as to question if there is a Spirit behind and in all this framework of nature and of self. It was dreary to think of human life as under a doom-like probation, with only a probability of escape from eternal condemnation, but it was not so dismal nor so fatal as to doubt accountability and to suspect the eternal verdicts that await conduct and character. The doubt of the present day is a great weakener; that of the past often detracted little from a man's strength. It left him face to face with duty, and with unimpaired conscience; truth still existed even if the man were overwhelmed by a misconception of it; there was reality, and no one is wholly weak in the presence of reality. But the doubt of to-day destroys the sense of reality; it questions truth; it envelops all things in its puzzle, — God, immortality, the value of life, the rewards of virtue, the operations of conscience; it puts a quicksand under every step; it ungirds the faculties so that they no longer work to any end; it undermines purpose and inspiration, and leaves no path for the feet but aimless desire or native instinct, — life a maze, the heavens empty, the solid world the only reality! There is much of it, and it is all about us. It is not always a conscious thing. The lack of moral earnestness, the feeble sense of spiritual things, the material aims and standards of success, the push for wealth as the only real thing, the godlessness of society at large, — these are its signs and fruits.

We will not, to-day, take our thought into the wide world, but will instead limit it to a class.

There are many who suffer in mind from these

doubts, but remain true in heart, — the mind all torn and bruised, dumb with perplexity, blind from the rapidly shifting lights that pass before it, but the heart still true to the faith that once was so beautiful and nourishing. In their hearts they still hold to the living Christ, but the ruthless spirit of doubt in their minds leaves him a dead Christ in Joseph's tomb ; there is no redeemer of Israel nor of mankind ; his words seemed true and were full of promise and hope, but he himself died as helpless as the thieves beside him, and has gone with them to mix with the elements. His cry to the Father, his vision of Paradise, his commitment of his spirit to God, were the illusive ecstasy of a dying brain. The old sullen order of death and silence goes on uninterrupted ; evil and doom still have sway, and there is no deliverance.

There are many who think in these ways, but still pray or try to pray, still keep up the Christian charities, still exercise themselves in the Christian graces, still deny themselves, and are brave and patient and true and pure.

What is to be done for such as these ? What are they to do for themselves ? How shall the head come to think with the heart ?

There is something that we can do for one another ; there is more that we can do for ourselves ; but full deliverance can be gained only through Christ himself. Christ is the main factor in the solution of these puzzles. Put him at his full value, and the problem will solve itself as the sun solves the mysteries of darkness and separates shadow from substance.

Christ came to these two men to rescue them not merely from doubts, but from doubts that were sad, and that drew their sadness from hearts that were still true to him. Their heads needed him, but their hearts drew him. And he came to them not merely because their state was sad, but because it was dangerous. For, in the long run, the head wins and the heart goes under. Doubt saps the vigor of life. The heart wearies in its vain efforts to send faith into the mind when the mind ceases to play into it with honest conviction. And so Christ comes to these men for rescue. Now see how wisely and thoroughly he effects it. He might have said at once: "Your fears are groundless; I am the Christ." But had he said this, they would have fallen at his feet in an ecstasy of joy, all their sad doubts flown away. Their hearts would have been relieved, but their heads would not have been lifted to the level of their hearts; one would have been flooded with joy, but the other only convinced that this friend Jesus was still alive.

Christ wished to put a larger conception of himself, of his relation to Jewish history and to humanity, into their minds, and so he discoursed to their minds while their hearts are still oppressed. For we are not in the best state to receive knowledge when we are surcharged with happiness; then we believe anything, but the belief does not strike into the depths of our nature and become lasting. The lessons we learn in sadness and from loss are those that abide. Sorrow clarifies the mind, steadies it, forces it to weigh things correctly. The soil moist

with tears best feeds the seeds of truth. And so Christ, while still but a fellow-traveler with them on the way to Emmaus, began with Moses and all the prophets, and showed them that these old scriptures concerned him; that he — the Christ — was their fulfillment; that it behooved him to suffer as he had, and, by such a path, to enter into his glory. That is, he put a broad and rational basis under their faith. This method of Christ's deserves the closest attention. He used all the knowledge of these men, all their beliefs, all they had ever heard or thought of, their whole world of truth, and said, "Christ is the meaning of it all; it all leads up to him; he is the key to it." He thus put a bottom under their faith, linked it to their knowledge, gave them something for their minds to feed on in the future, and put them in the way of learning something of the breadth and scope of his work. He is no man of a day, no mere worker of miracles, not the last prophet or teacher of good precepts, no gracious rabbi; he is not simply one strong enough to rise from the dead: he is instead the fulfillment of Jewish history, the manifestation of all that God has meant from the first. All along God has been a deliverer by sacrifice, and now deliverance has come in its supreme form and power, and by the old and eternal way of sacrifice, and with the triumphant vindication of glory entered on through resurrection.

These men could not understand this lesson at once, but it was lodged in their minds, and formed the basis of that immense transformation in thought

by which they and their fellows went over from their old conception of Christ as simply their master to the conception of him as the fulfillment of their national history, — a transformation that is otherwise inexplicable. The peculiarity in the change of the apostles after the resurrection is the immensely larger scope of their views. Hence their first preaching was chiefly an epitomizing of the Old Testament. It sounds dull to our ears, but it is full of significance as an attempt to link Christ with all previous history and with the whole order of the world so far as they knew the world. It discloses truth of immense value, and shows how modern doubt of Christ is best met. Redemption is the key to this world; there is no other. To deliver the world; to get it out of the order of nature, its limitations, its evil, its death and doom; to get it out of sin and the death of sin, — there is no other explanation of the world but this. Until you plant yourself on this central necessity and fact, you will have doubt and confusion. But see this, know this, and doubts vanish.

What is needed to cure the skepticism of the day is a direct and, so far as may be, an adequate view of Christ. In the weakening and breaking-up of theological systems, the part in them filled by Christ vanishes along with the rest, and there is actually no function or place left for him in our thought; identified with the systems, he disappears with them as they sink out of sight. The Romish conception of Christ as a perpetual sacrifice, a simple offset to sin, cannot, even when stripped of its grossness, satisfy

the mind. Sin is a great fact, but it is negative, and Christ is here in the world for more than to undo a negation. Calvinism narrows still more the conception of Christ by making him a mere factor in a system of divine sovereignty and decrees and election, a cog in a wheel, or a wheel amongst wheels that grind out an irrational destiny for mankind. Sovereignty decrees and elects; Christ dies for the elect; the Spirit regenerates and sanctifies the effectually called, who alone are saved, while the non-elect perish everlastingly by the same sovereign decree. It was in such a system as this that Christ was made to bear a part till the heart broke away from its cruelty and injustice, dragging the mind with it; for Calvinism is strong on the mind-side, and is well-nigh impregnable so long as it is kept apart from the human sentiments and instincts of the heart. Its weakness and its downfall are due to the admissions it is forced to make in behalf of infants, — admissions wrenched from the system by the demand of the heart crying for its own, and by the imperative sense of fairness lodged in every breast. If exceptions to the inexorable grinding of the system can be made for infants, why not for others? Through this grudgingly accorded exception — for Calvinism still asserts that only elect infants are saved — the whole system is flowing out, as pent waters seek the narrow fissure through which they press at first drop by drop, but at last with their whole current. It is a significant fact that these ancient systems of theology, for the most part, break down over infants. It is here that human nature

takes its final stand and utters its defiant protest. It is significant also that where theology so often breaks down and ends, Christianity begins. "And he took a little child, and set him in the midst of them, and said, Whosoever shall receive one of such little children in my name receiveth me: and whosoever receiveth me receiveth not me, but him that sent me."

But when the heart thus forced the head to admit that Christ died for all, and that he is the Redeemer of the world, the entire system began to give way; for Calvinism is not adjusted to a general atonement. So long as it consistently held to a limited atonement, it antagonized only the heart; but when it became "moderate," and asserted a general atonement while it held on to decrees, it lost the respect of the head. Weak and ill-adjusted systems continue for a time, but at last yield to the instinctive demand of the mind for consistency. The process of disintegration is, however, attended with confusion and doubt. We are standing to-day in the midst of this theological wreck, — its ruins around us, its dust filling the air, and the question on many lips is, Where is the Christ? Has he perished with the system? What place are we to assign him in our thoughts? What work are we to ascribe to him? The exact trouble with multitudes at present, whose hearts still turn warmly to Christ, is that they are not clear what he has done for them, what relations he sustains to them and they to him. The old theology is no longer sufficiently coherent as a system to contain Christ; where then

is he? Such is the demand; for we must think rationally and in some order, if not within a system. Many stand to-day where the two disciples stood when on the way to Emmaus, — thrown out of their old conceptions, and not yet seeing any other. They have had a very clear idea of the kingdom and of the part Christ was to play in it, — a conception supported by prophecy, definite, easily understood, and who would dare to say that it was not lofty, — the redemption of Israel? But it had faded away, and now what shall they think of Christ? He has not merely died out of their sight; he has died out of their thought, and left them in mental confusion. But their doubt sprang not so much from what had happened to Christ as from what had happened to their conception of him, for they had lived more in their theory of the redemption of Israel than in the personal Redeemer. It was the shattering of their system that troubled them. It had filled so much space in their minds that when it was broken up Christ vanished with it, staying only in their loving hearts.

The same thing is going on all around us. The systems in which Christ has been made to serve as a factor are thinning into mist, and losing shape and proportion and meaning; and as they fade away or merge into other systems, the figure of Christ grows dim and recedes into the past along with the passing forms. "But no!" our hearts cry, "it cannot be so; it cannot be that Christ is not a reality; it is not possible that he dies when the creed dies. But what does he do? What is

his relation to the new thought that crowds upon the age? What place does he fill in the newly discovered order of nature and in the fresh tasks of human society? What is his real relation to the world? How is he a personal Saviour?" Thank God, it is getting to be possible to answer these questions. We are coming to see that Christ, in his real character, was no more present in the old Calvinism than in the Romish mass. Christ cannot be put into a system. He cannot be explained by any one relation, such as the relation to sin, or to law, or to sacrifice, or to the church, or to the individual, or to humanity. We are beginning to see that instead of ascribing too large a place in theology to Christ, it has been too small. We made him the head of the elect, but not head over all; a sacrifice for the sin of the world, but not the redeemer of it; the head of the church, but not of humanity; an example for believers, but not the order of society; the Son of God, but not the Son of Man. We have treated him as a heavenly visitant, as God simply wearing a robe of flesh, as a being chiefly exceptional in humanity instead of the absolute fulfillment of humanity.

The task is to adjust our minds to the larger conceptions of Christ now possible and urged upon us by our needs and by the thought of the age. We need that done for us which was done for the two disciples, — Christ set before us as the fulfillment of all revelation, — natural, human, divine. We still think of him as our personal Saviour from the guilt and misery of personal sin, and still retain him in

all the dear, interior relations of our spirits, our friend and comforter and example, but we must also set him in those larger relations, which are now getting to be apprehended with some clearness, as the Head of humanity; as containing in himself the history and destiny of humanity; as the law and the order of human society; as the head of the nation as well as of the church; as God actually in humanity, and so manifesting the divine humanity; as the light of the world that lights every man born into it, and also lights up its dark mazes, its paths that run backward through all the creating ages and forward into ages of spiritual life and glory.

Doubt is a child of limited sight; but the vision of Christ is universal sight. It reveals all things; it creates an order in the world; it puts meaning into things; it tells me how to get out of my evil and sin, how to live, what to do, and where I shall go; it gives me the motive that I need and all the inspiration I can bear; it makes life a real, orderly, and sufficient thing, — life indeed, and as high and strong and noble as we would have it. And as the vision of Christ clarifies our individual life, so it clears up and explains the whole world. It is like standing in the sun, where all the planets are seen moving in harmonious orbits, vast but simple, many and unlike, but clear at the first glance.

These are not idle words. No one can look seriously at the world without confessing that reconciliation is its great need, — man with man, man with himself, class with class, nation with nation, and all with God. Sense needs to be reconciled with spirit,

past ages with the present, time with eternity, temporal life with eternal life. And reconciliation there will be, for the Reconciler is at work, turning the hearts of men towards each other and bringing them into peace with themselves and so with God. There is no other way or name but his. If other ways are helpful, they are also his; forbid them not! When we catch sight of this reconciling work, and see it in all its vast sweep, and feel its transforming energy at work within us, not only do doubts vanish, but a great joy enters into us. "Did not our hearts burn within us, while he opened to us the scriptures?"

The vision of Christ, set in the full light of all revelation, enkindles the whole nature. The deeps of God call to the deeps within us. Then we are ready to take up the cross and follow him to death; then we are ready to lose all that we may win him.

TRUTH THROUGH AND BY LIFE.

"In theology, intuition works marvels. While ordinary intelligences are climbing the paths of the holy mountain by force of study, the choicest minds gain its summit with one bound. They do not learn; they understand. They have the instinct of the divine. While the argument is going on in the dark, sudden flashes overflow them. What matter words and formulas? They see, they possess, they enjoy." — Joseph Roux, *Meditations of a Parish Priest.*

"I am sure that when the listening repose of the multitude was broken as the sermon closed, and, like a melted stream, the crowd flowed away into the city, the people carried something more with them than a handful of good precepts. I think that they went silently, or with few words, with something of exaltation and wonder at themselves in their faces. They had been taught that they were God's children. One who was evidently God's Son himself had told them so. He had bidden them, as God's children, at once to see duty with something of his own immediateness of perception, and also to hear him announcing it to them out of a Father's lips. Duty, the thing they ought to do, had shone for them that morning at once with its own essential sweetness and with the illumination of the Father's will. No wonder that as they walked together they said to one another: 'He speaks to us with authority.'" — Rev. Phillips Brooks, D. D., *The Influence of Jesus*, p. 33.

TRUTH THROUGH AND BY LIFE.

Then certain of the Scribes and Pharisees answered him, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee. But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it but the sign of Jonah the prophet: for as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh shall stand up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and behold, a greater than Jonah is here. The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it; for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold, a greater than Solomon is here. — St. Matt. xii. 38–43.

One of the foremost questions among Biblical scholars at present is, How did Christ quote the Old Testament? Did he cast upon it a supernatural light, confirming its letter and vindicating its statistical and historical accuracy by direct and superior knowledge; or did he use it simply to illustrate and confirm his points? The trend of thought is towards the latter view. Christ did not concern himself with questions of interpretation; they did not exist in his day; nor would he have regarded them if they had existed, nor will those who have entered into his mind pay much heed to

them. The superior knowledge of Christ did not pertain to such questions. His use, by way of illustration, of a name or an incident settles no technical question that may be raised in regard to it; he simply used it as he found it. But the way in which he used any character or incident does settle the moral element or truth involved in the character or incident. For example, Christ here refers to Jonah, but his reference does not indicate how the book of Jonah is to be interpreted, — whether it is to be regarded as historical, or parabolic, or poetical, or mythical, — yet it does confirm and indorse the moral truth involved in the story. He swept past the formal questions that might be raised as to literal accuracy, and struck for the spiritual truth contained in them, which does not depend upon literal accuracy. Why think of small questions when there are large ones at hand? It would be well to imitate him in this respect.

It is curious to observe the subtle contrast Christ makes between Jonah and Solomon. The Scribes and Pharisees say to him, "Master, we would see a sign from thee;" and they would prefer one from heaven, some stupendous and outflashing miracle, — a portent in the sky forerunning some event, the sun standing still, the stars turned back in their courses, the clouds moving at his word. Then they would believe on him. A natural request, it may be thought, and one still made. These Scribes, and those who now repeat it, do not see that thus they put themselves on the level of the heathen who build their faith on external signs. The apparent

miracle is the basis of all religions till we come to Christ, but all the generations they taught were wicked and adulterous. A religion so founded and forced into men from the outside, cannot make them better; it may control them, but it cannot change and mould them into goodness. Christ turns on them with an emphasis borrowed from his own deep insight rather than from their dull perception, and says, Why do you ask for any other signs than those I have given you? I have preached the gospel to the poor; I have done works of saving mercy and redeeming love; I have preached repentance; I have enthroned love amongst you and will lift it still higher, for I shall die and rise again for its vindication. These signs, wrought on the earth and not in the sky, before your hearts and not before your eyes, are all I shall give, because they are all that will do you good, all that reveal my power and attest that I came from the Father. In illustration, he refers them to their own Scriptures, and says, My sign is like Jonah's. He preached repentance; that was his sign; it is also mine. He came to his work of deliverance after an imprisonment like that of the tomb; I shall come to the crowning vindication of my work from the grave. As Jonah's experience was linked to his preaching of repentance, so my resurrection will be for the comfort and the justification of those who believe on me. Neither Jonah's imprisonment nor my resurrection has any meaning as a sign apart from its moral purpose. Christ thus illustrated himself through Jonah. He did not commit himself to the details of Jonah's history, but simply pierced their meaning.

But on what a height does it place that much-scoffed at bit of Hebrew Scripture! Mockers hold it up to contempt and blind zealots urge its literal truth, — both wrong and equally oblivious of its profound meaning. To both, Jonah in the whale's belly is the main thing, but Jonah led by God to his duty of preaching repentance, and foreshadowing the supreme truth of universal divine mercy, is overlooked. Christ chose him out of moral sympathy to illustrate himself.

Not thus did he treat Solomon. A keen critic, had one been present, might have detected an apparently invidious comparison between the humblest of the prophets and the greatest of the kings. Solomon was the ideal king of the Jewish nation; he stood for its highest conception and embodied its highest hopes. Solomon was David's son, and the Messiah would be David's son; they would be similar. The long, peaceful, brilliant, and powerful reign of that monarch was like that which should come. His wisdom was of the sort that delighted the oriental mind, — ethical, prudential, keen, and reverent. His piety was that of the ritual, and did not exclude the highest degree of present and immediate enjoyment. Thus Solomon stood before the Jews, but Christ seems to have had little liking for him. He mentions him but twice, and then in terms of unfavorable contrast. His glory, when put on to the full, was not equal to that of the Syrian rose by the wayside. Something of a shock he must have given to the conventional ideas of those who had sounded the glory of Solomon for a thousand years!

But underneath lurks a low estimate of Solomon: his glory was of a sort Christ did not believe in; the lily that purpled the fields had a truer glory because it reflected the glory of him who made it. So here, while allowing a certain wisdom to Solomon that drew a curious stranger from afar, he unhesitatingly asserts his own as superior and himself as greater. Christ does not here contrast Solomon with himself as the conscious Messiah, but because his teaching was truer and his kingdom had the elements of a better glory. There is an undertone of slight regard and rejection, that the disciples seem to have caught, for his name is never mentioned again. He is not named in the heroical and saintly list in Hebrews, nor does he appear in the stupendous symbolism of the Apocalypse. Both he and his reign represent the ease and external glory of the nation, — not the struggles by which it achieved them. Neither he nor his reign stands for any great truth, or moral principle, or spiritual purpose.

We will now inquire in what respects Christ was greater than Solomon.

Christ, as I said, was not forcing his Messiahship on the people; he did not teach this by assertion apart from truth that revealed it. He did not set his Messianic character over against one who could not have had it if he would; that would have been like the triumph of a mountain over a hillock, or of the head over the hand. He is making a comparison that rebukes those who are before him. And what was their fault? They failed to recognize the truth when they heard it; they failed to see in

Christ's works a revelation of God; and they had a false conception of wisdom and of greatness. The men of Nineveh understood when they heard a preacher of repentance, but you do not, though I preach it more plainly. The queen of the south came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, but I bring a profounder wisdom, and you do not recognize it. In the judgment, these heathen will condemn you, — you who read the preaching of Jonah and the Proverbs of Solomon. The comparison turns on the points in which it was possible for Solomon and himself to be compared, not on his own nature or official character.

We will contrast them only as teachers.

The Proverbs could not well be spared from the Bible nor dropped out of the life of the world. A proverb is the condensed wisdom of long experience. When men have found out that a principle or habit is true and right, some wise man puts it into a brief, epigrammatic form that is easily remembered, and so always ready for use. It becomes a sort of guide or law, ready at hand, by which men decide conduct; and so used its value is great. It appeals to common sense and intuition, and saves the necessity of argument and reflection and special examination of each case. Take the most familiar of all: "Honesty is the best policy." No one questions it; if one is tempted to dishonesty, it is ready with its imperative lesson. If a man is wavering, it besieges him with its irresistible wisdom, and draws him back from his own sophistry. It has all the force of all the ages of experience; it is the universal verdict

of mankind. It does more to keep men honest than all the laws that ever were made. But if it has value, it also has defect, and the defect applies to nearly all proverbs. It is a rule, and rules do not create character. A man might obey this proverb forever and not be an honest man; he acts honestly, but he may not be honest. For the most part, proverbs prescribe conduct, but do not furnish a full and proper motive. Now, conduct is of immense importance, and is the constant attendant of character, but it falls short of character. Hence proverbs most abound and are chiefly used in early stages of society and by untrained minds. There are few of recent origin, and the cultured mind seldom uses them. They are the alphabet of morals; they are usually but half truths, and they seldom contain the principle of the action they teach. They are commonly prudential, watch-words and warnings, and so lean towards a selfish view of life. These remarks apply only in part to the Proverbs of Solomon, because he threw into them all the fear of God and all the religious knowledge that his nation possessed; many of them reach a long way towards the Sermon on the Mount, and some touch the deepest springs of the human heart. They are of highest use, and ought to be read and re-read for their wisdom, their broad interpretation of life, and their ethical value. Especially ought the young, with whom conduct comes first, to study them. They are strong in the warnings they sound against indulgence of the passions, — lust, anger, pride, envy, drunkenness. They protest against lying and cheat-

ing and bribing and every form of social unrighteousness. They touch tenderly on the family and press its duties. They bear down heavily on folly of all sorts, the idle, tale-bearing, senseless tongue, and many of them are "rods for a fool's back." They insist on truth and simplicity and justice and moderation, on humility and patience and charity and kindness. Everywhere they exalt wisdom and identify it with goodness, and their universal characteristic is common sense. They are also reverential and abound in mention of God. For practical wisdom and as daily guides of conduct, there are no other utterances of truth comparable with them. If they were heeded and obeyed, they would bring the individual, the family, the community, the nation, into a state of ideal perfection. Their lack is that they have no power to turn into living, moulding energy, They simply state truth, and prescribe conduct. They are impersonal, and have no living force to drive them home. Truth has little power except as it comes from a person who adequately represents it. Hence you will never have a supreme truth at work in the world until a supreme person utters it and vindicates it in his life. These Proverbs of Solomon were spoken to an age that swept past them into destruction. Why did the people not heed them? Because there was no personal force and incarnation of them behind them. The author himself violated many of them, and drew others out of his own bitter experience. Truth must be incarnated in a just representative in order to be powerful. This is the weakness of the Proverbs viewed as effective agents;

they are without incarnation. Truth cannot save a man nor a world; only a person can do that. The world is flooded with truth and always has been, but how powerless! Truth! it is the commonest thing. It cries in the street and from the housetop. There are thousands of books full of it; thousands of teachers who are all the while declaring it. It is wrought into systems by the philosophers; it echoes from the measures of the poets; it sparkles upon the pages of the essayists — Plutarch and Bacon and Montaigne and Emerson; it drops from the daily speech of all men, and all men everywhere confess it: but the world pays small heed to its multitudinous voice, — offering an outward homage, but pressing on in paths of greed and passion and ambition and falsehood, knowing truth but never wise. Truth is not indeed without influence and inspiring force, but how incommensurate with its clearness and its universality! And whatever influence it has is chiefly of a prudential sort; it plays about the surface of life, repressing or enforcing conduct, but creating no fountain of life. Truth must be grounded in a person and be vindicated in life: then it becomes a reality; then it appeals to men; then it flows along its divinely created channel, — from life to life, from heart to heart, from spirit to spirit.

These thoughts enable us to compare Solomon and Christ as teachers. We search in vain amongst the Proverbs for the man who uttered them, and we search the man in vain for the profound practical wisdom that dropped from his lips, — a man teaching humility and simplicity but fond of pomp and glory,

reverent and believing but lapsing into idolatry, urging domestic virtues but lacking in their practice, full of wise, healthy speech but himself misanthropic, teaching a way of life he did not follow, driven to God at last by failure, and not brought to him along the path of rectitude that he so clearly discerned. Hence his truth went out naked into the world, and weighted by his failure to realize it in himself. He gets at truth on its negative side, by an experience of its opposite, and not by a direct, positive appropriation of it.

Turn now to Christ. We can match nearly every precept of Christ with a like one from Solomon. Why does it not appeal to us with equal force? First, Christ had a single, solid background for his truth,—God the Father,— while Solomon spoke from an observation of human life, or rather of the world as it goes. Hence Christ's truth wore an eternal character and was as the voice of God himself; it was absolute; it came from above, and was not picked up here and there. Christ stood upon the earth and looked abroad and up into heaven, and repeated the one word of God he heard. His teaching had unity and divine emphasis and power; it was a revelation of the mind of God. But Solomon, gifted indeed with an ethical discernment that justifies his distinction as "the wisest man," sat on his throne and looked about him, translating the conduct and histories of men into their equivalents in language. The wisdom of one is from above; that of the other is from the world and wears everywhere a mundane cast. One speaks with indisputable authority; the

other but shows man to himself, and in such a revelation there is no redeeming power; the stream will not float one above its fountain. It may seem strange that two precepts, stating the same truth, equally well phrased, should not have equal power. It is because the power of truth lies chiefly in its source. For truth has not in itself a propelling power commensurate to the resistance it meets in human nature; wisdom is no match for passion. Truth must come to men weighted and charged with outside energy; and the only power that men universally and unquestionably heed is the power of God. Hence Christ referred his teachings directly to the Father; his words were not his own, but were given him of the Father. Thus they had all the commanding power, the absolute truth, the infinite appeal, the sovereign authority of God. This was not a mere claim of Christ's, a shrewd trick, like the Delphic and Memnonian oracles, to win attention; it was the outcome of his divine consciousness, and was so clearly attested that the whole world has confessed its reality; for whatever be thought of the person of Christ, none will deny that his words were divine.

There is also a wide unlikeness in the tone of their teachings, especially if the book of Ecclesiastes is referred to Solomon. This book stands in the Bible rather as a warning than a guide, telling us how not to think of life. It echoes the universal voice of mankind as it interprets itself by its own light: life is a puzzle; good and evil are inextricably mingled; time and chance have sway; there is one end

to all alike; all is vanity and vexation of spirit. So has the book of life been read in all ages, — from Job to Hamlet, from Solomon to Goethe; and the wisest conclusions are, Trust God and wait; forget destiny in action. Both are wise, but they do not lift the burden from the heart nor take perplexity out of the mind. Under such an interpretation of life, men are left to themselves, and so either walk prudently amongst the shadows, or eat and drink in their to-day, or curse God in pessimistic despair.

Christ's teachings are the contrast to this. Life is no puzzle to him; it presents no question. There is no "time and chance" in his words. Good does not die out into evil, life does not sink away into vanity. Everywhere and always there is one clear, unvarying note sounding an eternal distinction between good and evil, declaring life to be good and a path to blessedness. It is not a phantasm, nor a play of illusions, nor a doubtful struggle, nor a process of vanity. It is not something to be interpreted by sibylline leaves scattered on the winds and burned by fire. It is not the riddle of a sphinx, a guess involving destiny. It is not something that passes with immeasurable gradations towards Nirvana, the nothing or the all. Christ's treatment of life contrasts with that of Plato, who finds its realization in beautiful dreams of ideal conditions; and with that of the dramatists, who picture it held down under destiny; and with that of the moralists, who put it under a bare theory of endurance or enjoyment. His view of life is simple, but it covers it; it is clear, but clear because his sky is full of light;

it is not only without question, but without the suspicion of it; it is not only without doubt or uncertainty, but it seems not to know them. It is the reverse of the conception of life as a contending play between doubt and hope, and, while a truly human and natural view, it becomes divine by the absence of all human limitations and weaknesses, and is full of the yea and amen of absolute vision.

God is the Father; men are his children; the pure in heart see him; the meek inherit the earth; love is the one duty, hate the one evil; struggle is not in vain; suffering has its recompense; evil does not triumph and is not eternal; sorrow and sacrifice are real but joy is above them. The kingdom of heaven is the only reality, and Satan may be trampled under foot. Nowhere in Christ's words do we discover any balancing of probable and improbable, any sense of mystery, any question as to the meaning of life, any perplexity as to duty, any doubt of the reality of things, of their source or character or purpose or end. His view of life is that of a child and also that of God; simple as that of a child and incontrovertible as that of Omniscience. It is this overwhelming positiveness, this uniformity of assertion, swaying neither way under the pressure of events, this single and yet universal interpretation of life, that puts him in contrast not only with Solomon, but with all other teachers. Christ alone explains life and harmonizes it.

There is another contrast between these two teachers; one made but small personal vindication of his teaching, while the other brought his life into ideal harmony with all that he taught.

In certain prudential and practical matters of state policy, Solomon illustrated his teachings, but he did not cast himself upon their moral principles. He was a man of keen insight and ready wit, profoundly reflective, reverent in spirit, and broad in his views of life. He saw clearly that the nation was founded in righteousness; he well understood the secret of his father's reign, and started out in the same path of righteous and reverent energy, but rather in the way of imitation and by hereditary propulsion. He relied mainly on resources already provided, and simply guided the nation along the path of power on which it had entered. In scope of mind he was greater than David, but he lacked his energy and moral force and lofty devotion. His character was not equal to the temptations it met. He saw all manner of folly, wickedness, wrong, mistake, and set them down in solemn or stinging epigrams, but did not throw himself as a personal force into the evil in order to overcome it. He was a critic but not a reformer, a commentator on life but not a leader in it. He illustrates a common mistake, — the mistake of the mere thinker and moralist who utters his word and trusts to its inherent efficacy for results, — the mistake of those who do not follow precept with example, who preach crusades but stay at home, who discourse upon life but withhold themselves from the struggle of it. It is a mistake because it violates the inmost meaning of life as a real process in the world. For life is not a set of propositions, nor a series of ideas, nor a congeries of related truths, but is a process of action; it is truth

at work, truth impersonated and vindicating its reality through actual struggle and endurance and victory. Life is achievement, and truth does its work only under that conception. If life were not this, — that is, a process of achievement, — there would have been no occasion for a real world; an existence of mere ideas or perceptions, or of pure mind without body or world, would have answered as well. One who utters truth and does not incarnate it in consistent action ignores the central principle of creation. Life is to be lived and truth is to be won by a process, nor can it have power in any other way. Divorced from life, it is simply a soul without an upholding and inclosing body; it is the absolute without the eternally necessary relative.

When we turn to Christ, we find a teacher who taught mainly by his life, and relied upon nothing else to vindicate his truth: his life was his teaching; he himself was the truth. So entirely and absolutely was this his method that he provided no other channel, making no book, employing no scribe, seldom appealing to the memory of his hearers for the preservation of his words, but always to his works and life. He spoke the Sermon on the Mount, and then went up and down Galilee illustrating it. The miracles were but the acting out of the truths he had received from God; his method was the method of God; the Father worked perpetually, and he worked. His teaching was no second-hand process; he did not content himself with teaching teachers, but turned truth straight into life. There is not a positive utterance of Christ's but is expressed in

action; not a duty enjoined but he did it; not a feeling urged but he felt it; not a hope imparted but he reposed on it; not a principle urged but he illustrated it.

There are certain truths essential to salvation, — consecration to God, a life of the Spirit, love through sacrifice, resurrection from the dead, and life eternal. Christ taught them by action, in his own person. We do not have these truths on the authority of his words; we have them on the authority of his life. He was baptized to signify his consecration; he opened himself to the Spirit and was filled with it; his whole life was a ministry of love by sacrifice; and in order to plant this central truth undyingly in the hearts of the world, he first acted it out in symbols of broken bread, and poured out wine — a vain and inconsistent thing in itself, — and then went out and suffered his body to be broken and his blood to be shed on the cross. To teach resurrection and future life, he rose from the dead and ascended alive into the heavens. Not to have died and risen again and ascended, would have taken unity out of his life as a teacher, and left him a weak and inconsistent figure on the page of history.

There is a marked avoidance by Christ of all methods of teaching except this one of personal action. It is a characteristic that goes to the very foundations, and holds up the whole structure of Christianity. In this, Christ is true to himself as the manifestation of God; for what do we know of God except by his works, and how shall Christ manifest God truly except by works? It goes fur-

ther still, and accords with creation as an actual and not an ideal process. It is a confirmation of human life as a reality, through which alone truth can be realized. In simpler words, it is an assertion that the meaning, the value, the truth of life can be gained only by an actual performance of its duties; and it is a denial that truth can be learned and the soul saved in any other way. A man cannot be taught, or lectured, or preached, or inspired, either into a knowledge of truth or into salvation. He must give himself in actual consecration to God; he must suffer himself to be led by the Spirit; he must die on the cross with Christ, and then he may hope to rise with him and enter into life everlasting.

It is in such a light as this that Christ stands out the supreme teacher. Not only does his life vindicate his truth, but it is the truth, and with what tremendous reality is it taught!

What are words, precepts, syllogisms, pictures, appeals, commands; what are eloquence, poetry, music, art, beside this living way, this way of truth lived out through all its steps of struggle, and endurance, and faith, and death, till it ended in the joy thus, and thus only, to be achieved?

The lesson is beyond expression practical. We know no truth except by action. We can teach no vital truth except through the life. We cannot attain to the eternal joy except as we walk step by step in that path of actual duty and performance in which he walked, who so gained its fullness and sat down at the right hand of the Father.

LIFE NOT VANITY.

"It must be some Divine Efflux running quite through our Souls, awakening and exalting all the vital powers of them into an active sympathy with some Absolute good, that renders us completely blessed. It is not to sit gazing upon a Deity by some thin speculations; but it is an inward feeling and sensation of this Mighty Goodness displaying itself within us, melting our fierce and furious natures, that would fain be something in contradiction to God, into an universal Compliance with itself, and wrapping up our amorous minds wholly into itself, whereby God comes to be all in all to us." — Dr. John Smith.

"I am heartily sorry for those persons who are constantly talking of the perishable nature of things and the nothingness of human life; for, for this very end we are here, to stamp the perishable with an imperishable worth; and this can only be done by taking a just estimate of both." — Goethe.

"The angel of righteousness is delicate and modest, and meek and quiet. Take from thyself grief, for it is the sister of doubt and ill temper. Grief is more evil than all the spirits, and is most dreadful to the servants of God, and beyond all spirits destroyeth man. For, as when good news has come to any one in grief, straightway he forgetteth his former grief, and no longer attendeth to anything except the good news which he hath heard, so do ye, also! having received a renewal of your spirit through the beholding of these good things. Put on, therefore, gladness, that hath always favor before God, and is acceptable unto him, and delight thyself in it; for every man that is glad doeth the things that are good, and thinketh good thoughts, despising grief." — *Shepherd of Hermas.*

LIFE NOT VANITY.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. — PSALM xxiii. 6.

THE phrase of the poet, that "this wise world is mainly right," has no better illustration than the use it makes of this twenty-third Psalm. There is no other form of words which it holds so dear, save perhaps the Lord's Prayer; but if that has a superior majesty, this has a deeper tenderness; if one is divine, the other is perfectly human, and its "touch of nature makes the whole world kin."

It was undoubtedly written by David, having all the marks of the man upon it; not while he was a shepherd-boy, but after an experience of life, and perhaps during the very stress of it. For a shepherd-boy does not sing of flocks and pastures, even if he be a true poet, but of things that he has dreamed yet not seen, imagined but not realized. Hence, youthful poetry is of things afar off, while the poetry of men is of things near at hand and close to their life, — the daisies under their feet, and the hills that rise from their doors. The young, when they express themselves, are full of sentimentality; that is,

feeling not yet turned into reality under experience; but there is no sentimentality here, — only solid wisdom, won by experience and poured out as feeling. The shepherd-boy becomes a warrior and king; life presses hard on him; he covers it in its widest extremes, tastes all its joy and bitterness; his heart is full and empty; he loves and loses; he is hunted like a partridge and he rules over nations; he digs deep pits for himself into which he falls, but rises out of them and soars to heaven. His nature was broad and apparently contradictory, and every phase of his character, every impulse of his heart, had its outward history. Into but few lives was so much life crowded; few have touched it at so many points, for he not only passed through vast changes of fortune, but he had a life of the heart and of the spirit correspondingly vast and various; and so his experience of life may be said to be universal, a thing that cannot be said of Cæsar or Napoleon, — men whose lives outwardly correspond to his. Hence, when some stress of circumstance was heavy upon him and faith rose superior to it, or perchance when the whole lesson of life had been gone over and he grasped its full meaning, he sang this hymn of faith and content. He sought the frame-work of his thought in his boyhood, — those fresh days when he led his sheep into pastures that were green, and by waters that were still. For a fine nature is always going back to its youth, won towards the innocence and simplicity it has known and partly lost, and thus assuring itself that they are an eternal possession to be gained again. We go back to youthhood because

there is a youth before us. The race of life is a circle; its early days are a goal to which, as well as from which, we press, seeking their joy, their freedom, their innocence, their insensibility to time, their harmony with the things that are. What, then, is the gain if we come back to our starting-point? Only in learning that these things are realities, turning them into the bone and sinew of compact human life, taking them from their source in God and weaving them into a conscious personality.

Once before, also, this king, whose life spread between a harp and a sword, recurred, in the same poetic way, to his youth. When shut in a hold, near his birthplace, by the Philistines, and condemned to weary inactivity, he yearns for the water of the well by the gate where he had watered his flocks, and he himself had drank in the light of the eyes of the Hebrew maidens. Who has not felt the same, — longed in some weary moment of heavy labor or fretful care for the shade of the trees that overspread him in childhood, for the water that gushed from the spring, for the patter of the rain on the roof, when the night brought no darkness and life had no shadow? "Cherish the dreams of thy youth," says the ancient sage. Life is going wrong with us if the hard present crowds out the memory of the early past. Keep alive thy youth, for it may be won back!

This Psalm of reminiscence is not simply a leap over intervening years into the first of them, but, starting thence with a metaphor, it is a review of life and an estimate of it; it is an interpretation of life.

On looking it over and summing it up, the author states his view of life; *his* life, indeed, but what man ever had a better right to pronounce on life in general? If life is evil, he certainly ought to have known it. If life is good, he had abundant chance to prove it by tasting it in all its widest variety. We are not to read these words of flowing sweetness as we listen to soothing music, a lullaby in infancy and a death-song in age, but as a judgment on human life. It is Oriental, but it is logical; it is objective, but it goes to the centre; it is simple, but it is universal; it is one life, but it may be all lives. It is not the picture of life as allotted and necessary, but as achieved. Live your life aright and interpret it aright, and see if it is not what you find here.

Let us search out the various notes of this Psalm; I think we shall find them uniting in a harmony that is jubilant.

It may be said broadly that it is an utterance of cheer.

The writer is satisfied that life is good, and is so to be spoken of. He is not insensible to its heavy and dark side, but he defies it in a certain way. He may walk in the very shadow of death, as he had often done and as all do, but he will fear no evil. Death is a fearful thing, but the fear of it, not death, is the evil. It is an orderly thing, a part of the leading of the good Shepherd. We are not forsaken when we die, but are led still. The lambs of our human flocks are not left untended when they enter this shadowy realm, but are folded in his bosom; they return not to us, but we go to them. He gets into

many a dark valley, as we all do, — disappointments that cloud him, losses that make effort seem vain, strifes that overtax strength, treacheries that breed despair, failures that beget disgust, temptations that beguile into hideous sin, false loves and true, and each ending in sorrow. As subject, and king, and husband, and father, and brother, and kinsman, and even in his relations to God, this man had experiences that were enough to lead him to throw up the game of life as lost, but they did not so work in him. He pressed through their first meaning and influence to their real significance. With a brave and patient heart and a regal will — both open to the Spirit of God — he pushed on and worked his way through, never losing sight of the guiding rod and comforting staff of his divine Shepherd. And so, at last, these experiences change color and begin to seem to him good; they so work in and harmonize him that his whole nature is full of gladness.

There is also in this Psalm a tone of triumph. He has eaten from spread tables of bounty before his enemies; they do not fret him nor break the peaceful current of his life. This wise man learned that highest of all arts, — how to bear himself towards his enemies. Enemies he necessarily had, as every strong man, who lives a full life, must have. One cannot touch life at many points and do a man's work in the world without arousing more or less of what may be called enmity, — criticism, jealousy, misrepresentation, slander, contempt, ostracism. David was no weakling who sat down before his enemies and suffered them to do what they would with him and his

kingdom; he thwarted and punished where he justly might, and bore the rest patiently, passing by the greater part with lofty indifference. Nor is any man required to ignore enmity. We have a personality, an influence, a character, a work, to guard and keep clear. It is not the part of truth and of true men to leave an open path for evil and evil men. Pharisees are to be burned in fires of their own kindling; Sadducees are to be silenced; Satan is to be trampled under foot. Truth is not an impersonal thing, and life is not a play of generalities. It is a personal world, and the contact of good and evil is personal, and therefore it breeds enmity and compels conflict. Forbearance, patience, and indifference, are indeed the greater part of our duty before enmity, but never dull acquiescence, and often relentless war. All depends on the question and the issue at stake. We may suffer personally, but we have no right to let truth suffer. Christ allowed the Pharisees to crucify him, but never for one moment did he cease in his conflict against them. He forgave those who nailed him to the cross, — not knowing what they did, — but he never forgave the traitors to the truth. When we make this distinction and keep personal feeling in abeyance, enmity is not so hard a thing to bear. Rather, in a superior man, it begets a sort of ecstasy. He walks his way amidst averted faces in triumph; one with God is a majority; legions of unseen angels keep him company; and the kingdom will surely come.

David also puts into this Psalm a spirit of content and satisfaction. His cup is full and runs over; his

head is perfumed with the oil of gladness; goodness and mercy follow him every day of his life. So it has been and so it shall be; he has been in God's house from the first, and there he will stay forever. Life is good to him; it is not vanity, nor a lie, nor a dissolving vision, but a solid and true thing, full of joy and peace. But the man who thinks so did not reach this conclusion because he was a king. What other king ever spoke words like these? He was not insensible to his outward career, but it was not the gold of his crown nor the power of his sceptre that gave him content. Such things do not work in this way. What we term success, — alas! it is now about our only conception of it, — namely, getting money, may be an element of contentment, but only as oxygen is an element of vital air. It burns up contentment unless mixed and tempered by other elements. Not from without, but evermore from the heart, are the issues of life. When there is peace and order within, an honest conscience, a true humility, a sincere contrition, a clear mind, a trained judgment, a benevolent spirit, a brave will, a profound faith, there may be a full contentment. I know that it is hard to go without, hard to be stripped of gains, hard to face age in poverty, and no man should who can properly avoid it. "This wise world is mainly right," and putting that thing we call substance or wealth between one's self and the world is a good part of the business of life. But there is something that every wise man, in these days, needs to learn more than how to get rich, and that is how to go without riches. All the energies of the age

are being sucked into this vortex, and mind for mind's sake, learning for learning's sake, art and science and the nobler ideals of faith, — these are going by default. Contentment, personal peace, national prosperity, will not come by this fullness of bread that we are seeking.

This Psalm also may be said to take a healthy view of life.

It is used and well used as a word for the dying, but there is not a morbid note in it. It is full of strong, calm, steady life, life that is sound and normal, and that is why the dying lean upon it; it puts the cup of life afresh to their lips.

It is an utterance specially fitted for these days when life is suspected, questioned if it is good, if the game is worth the candle, if the Preacher's vanity of vanities is not its real key, if earnestness and devotion and reality are not dreams of a mistaken past. The age undoubtedly runs to sadness; to pleasure, indeed, and therefore to sadness, for pleasure comes to an end; to excitement, and therefore again to sadness, for excitement tires and reacts; to strife and incessant toil, and therefore still more to sadness, for these forces spend themselves, and leave mind and heart without a vocation. Philosophy finds evil, and, knowing not what to do with it, curses God in pessimistic despair. Literature catches its tone and settles into hard realism, or floats away into sentimentality, reflecting the two moods of society. Science faces a dissolving world, and, seeing no other, drives men to that saddest of all conclusions, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we

die." It is said that disease tends to a typhoid or low type, and intellectual and social health seems to share in the same tendency. Life is hurried, restless, tired; it tends to despondency. The poets are sad and self-conscious; the look is introspective, to the small world of self, and not to the great world outside. The thought of the day is analytic, taking in pieces this framework of man and society that we are, and not synthetic, creating anew in thought the cosmos of the eternal order; hence our minds are held down to the partial or seeming evil, and not lifted to the universal good for which all things work together. Analyze man or society, and you will find enough evil, but put them together, set man in all his relations, get down to the resultant of the forces of society, and you will catch sight of a total good.

The materialism of the age helps on this tendency to sadness. The economists are telling us that the main thing is to prosper, to get money, to improve our condition, and by all means to "get on." This is success, — to be rich, to live in ceiled houses and wear fine raiment and fare sumptuously every day. But this path is thorny and steep and full of pitfalls, and so, after stumbling on for a time we find ourselves pierced through with many sorrows and wallowing in deep pits of failure, — for not all can come to Dives' table, — we begin to complain and to charge our disappointment to the world we are in. It is a rough world; stretch me no longer on its rack. I thought I was to ride through life, and here I am plodding along the dusty way with weary feet. I thought I was to reap rich success; the wise told me

how, and lo! my hands are empty; the world is bad and life is a delusion. Nor do the rich fare much better. The walls are fair, the cushions are easy, the linen is fine, the table is bountiful, but Dives is not happy. When men mistake life, the discovery of the mistake breeds sadness; mistake is essential sadness.

The fresh liberty of modern times just now works in the same direction. Whatever else tyranny and fixed custom did for or against men, it held them steady; it kept them to rigid and close ways of living, and the very necessity bred a sort of peace and content. But modern liberty and independence, modern individualism, open to every man the way to all the mistakes he is capable of; his freedom has not yet been moulded by intelligence and long experience. Hence, on every hand we see the sad tokens of unguided life. It will work itself clear in time, but meanwhile it is turbid with half-knowledge and ill-used privilege. Never before was there such prosperity. What an age and what a country is this! How good our houses, how fine our clothing, how generous our food, what art for our eyes, what music for our ears, what comfort in travel, what ease at home! Our whole external life, — how safe and orderly and well-proportioned! But it has no corresponding zest; it fades for most of us and changes color long before its autumn; it grows insipid and sinks into low estimate; its psalm is not keyed to joy, but wails in minor strains; our cup does not run over; goodness and mercy do not follow us from day to day with their conscious blessing. This

Psalm of David's is the reverse of this: it covers all our days, but it is cheerful; it takes in death and trouble, but it is not morbid; it embraces prosperity, but there is no reaction of satiety, no weariness or disgust.

But such a view of life must have its root in something that feeds it; it proceeds upon something; there are causes and forces that shape the conclusion. Let us see what they are.

It presents life as under God. The Lord is my Shepherd. Man is not a wild beast in a solitary den, with no friend but nature and no law but its own ravening appetite; he belongs to a higher order that has its life under a personal Will; he lives in relations to a superior Mind and Heart.

Freedom is a good thing, but it is freedom under law and a Law-giver; peace comes by obedience. Individualism may be the goal of human destiny; man is to become a king, but a king unto God, a priest at his own altar and to all humanity, but first and evermore unto God. Man will not rule over himself and have peace in the dominion of his soul except as he bows under an eternal sceptre. He will never be a servant of humanity except as he is the servant of God. Man is not happy in himself, but only in God. "Thou hast made us, and we have no peace till we have it in thee." This ecstatic cry of Augustine is soundest logic. Being made by God and set in relations to him, we do not know ourselves, nor can we adjust ourselves to our relations until we know God. David's life could be

turned into a psalm of peaceful content, because God was over it, and a guiding Shepherd throughout it. Such a fact makes room for the play of trust, without which life is a sad perplexity. For I cannot understand life; I cannot of myself find out why I am, nor whence I came, nor for what end; I cannot explain why this and that happen to me; I may see some cause, but no full reason or end; a cause is not a reason. By myself I am lost in this world, without paths except the circles of a clueless labyrinth, without stars of guidance except such as wander across the heavens, without light except that which only deepens the darkness. Now in such a state as this, I must either stray through life in sad perplexity, or I must trust God for a way. In such trust the most painful features of life, its mystery, its seeming vanity, its pain and burden and disappointment, its untimely end, its mischance, its inevitable contact with evil, lose their force. I am not bound to explain them; I may refer them to God, upon whom is the responsibility. I need not bear them in their naked form as evil, but in trusting God I trust a greater encompassing good, and may therefore believe that they are shaped for good. For only in a small sense do we make our lives; they are made for us. I am put within certain bounds of time, place, parentage, society, and this environment is by far the largest part of my life. I have liberty within it, enough to make me accountable, but I touch the inclosing walls every moment, and their binding constraint seems to me only evil until I can say, "God put them about me and for some good end."

This matter goes very deep and touches every one of us in a practical way, being simply the question whether we shall solve the problems, bear the burdens, and endure the evil of life alone, or whether we shall refer them to him who gave us life and put us where we are.

This Psalm takes what may be called the synthetic view of life; that is, it regards it as a whole. It is not an analysis of life, dividing it up, setting each part and feature by itself, counting certain things good and certain evil, marking some days with red letters and others with black. It gives life instead a certain cast of universality; it makes it all one; the Lord is always leading it as a shepherd; goodness and mercy follow it continually; it is forever in God's house. It would have been a sad and foolish thing for David, as it is for any man, to set about analyzing his life; it could not bear the strain; the evil and the sorrow would have held his thought, and outweighed the good. But taken as a whole, the colors supplemented and melted into each other, and left a picture that he could look at with peace. It is so with us all. None of us can take any year or day, or even hour, and pronounce it perfect. But as we look over the whole, we see that a general purpose of good overspreads it, and also that its general outcome is good. Its tendency has been to make us wiser, steadier, more patient and sympathetic, more obedient to law, more content with the things that are, and more hopeful. It is also well to see how one feature or experience of life plays use-

fully into another, how limitation works toward freedom, how a sickness or any other set-back contributes to some large good. "I was ill, and lost a whole month." Yes, but you earned some coin of patience, some gain of human sympathy, some profit of wisdom. One part of life feeds another; hence we must not weigh its parts, but the whole. One reason why men are now complaining of life is their hungry demand for instant and incessant pleasure; the cup of enjoyment must be filled every day. Amuse me, excite me, crown me to-day, is the cry. But as this cannot happen, the plan being rather to build man up into a being capable of holding happiness, men turn away in disgust, not discerning how and for what end they are made.

We must hold resolutely, as this Psalm does, to the truth that life is joy. "It does not seem so," you say; "it seems quite otherwise." Very likely, and so it will be while you trust in appearances rather than in principles. You say, "I have only appearances to go by." But suppose you take appearances, and try to construct out of them a theory of life; to explain life by its aspects and temporary features. You cannot thus find out that it is either good or bad; it will be a puzzle and a contradiction. Try instead principles; assume character as a means and joy as an end, and see if life is not plain as a printed page. We cannot think broadly on this subject without coming to see that joy is the end of existence. The secret of the universe is blessedness. Any other conception is treachery. By any other theory we are

betrayed creatures. If it is not so, then we know not what is or is not, and it matters little. We are sentient beings; this is fundamental truth, and it presupposes joy as its realization. There is a negative side, — the possibility of the opposite; but this is the great positive possibility, the thing for which we are made, the atmosphere we are to breathe, the essence by which we live. It has its laws and its method. Christ taught nothing higher or more central; he had for himself no other motive than the joy set before him and it was never less than full. It turns indeed on character; only the faithful servant enters into it, but setting this view aside, it is well to get it thoroughly wrought into us that existence is joy, that life is "bathed in it as an ether," and has no other true atmosphere. This is central truth; we must resolutely believe it, and so far as may be live it, or, if that is difficult, live towards it. If I am wretched, I am involved in some mistake, — my own or another's. If I am despondent, I am off the track of life. If existence has no zest, some poison has got into the cup. If I am led to deny that life is good, I change it into such a mass of contradiction and absurdity that it turns on me and forbids me to think or assert anything of it. If I am letting it fade out into a dull, insipid thing, I am falling away from the only heritage I have.

It is the duty and privilege of all to work away from sorrow and gloom and dullness towards joy. I know what griefs come to us, — Rachel weeping for her children because they are not, fathers broken-hearted over dead Absaloms. I know how shut in

and pressed down many of you are, how vast your desires and how small your portion; what dead-weights of shame and tender sorrow hang on you; what physical ailments, what lack of training, what force of evil habit, what clamor of appetite, what memory of evil, what earthiness of spirit, what infirmities of temper, shut you off from this world of joy. Still, you are to work towards it. Tears must flow and the head must bow in shame for a while, but when nature and conscience have had their due, turn once more to life, knowing it to be good.

Much might be said on the wisdom of taking a constantly fresh view of life. It is one of the moral uses of the night that it gives the world anew to us every morning, and of sleep that it makes life a daily re-creation. If we always saw the world, we might grow weary of it. If a third of life were not spent in unconsciousness, the rest might become tedious. God is thus all the while presenting the cup of life afresh to our lips. Thus after a night of peaceful sleep, we behold the world as new and fresh and wonderful as it was on the first morning of creation, when God pronounced it "very good." And sleep itself has a divine alchemy that gives us to ourselves with our primitive energy of body and mind. The days are not mere repetitions of themselves; to-morrow will have another meaning; I shall come to it with larger vision than I have to-day.

And then, how grandly life is unrolling at present! Knowledge gives to our minds almost a new world every year. How rapidly is man climbing into his throne of earthly supremacy, subduing nature, yoking

its forces to his will, getting all things under his hand! And how fast is humanity unfolding the greater mysteries of social life, coming to a knowledge of itself, finding out its laws, and getting society into shape; government, philosophy, science, all working together for humanity! Almost every day visible advance is made, — changes that are enough to set us agape with delighted wonder. The world is not dull except as we have dull eyes. It is a vain conceit, "a want-wit sadness," that tempts us to think we have exhausted it, that life has nothing more to offer. There are times, indeed, when its whole value and significance is taken away, dropped down into a grave deeper and wider to us than the whole world, swept out on the flood of disaster, turned into blackness by sinful shame; there are defects and losses and mistakes that induce weariness, and lead us to hold the world "a stage where every man must play a part, and mine a sad one."

But wait awhile, and look about you and above. The sun shines still; there is no change in the notes of nature. The blessed order of growth goes on. Humanity keeps on its upward way; God is leading it as a shepherd, and you are a part of it, and he is leading you, — not just now by still waters, but through the valley of shadows, — and would comfort you with his staff, show you what it all means and where it ends. Wait thus awhile, and you will find that you are still in God's house, and not in a dark and orderless world.

And so I say, in conclusion, think well of life and

the world. To suspect and question life, to hold it cheap, to use it listlessly or sadly, — this is treachery, this is folly. For what else have we but life, what other heritage, what other standing-ground; what else is there to hold us or anything that we have? To cheapen it, or hold it indifferently, or treat it scornfully, — this is the folly of one who smites and impoverishes himself.

This life of ours, just as it is, is so beautiful and glorious that we can imagine it offered to some newly created being of intelligence for acceptance or rejection, all its good and evil plainly set before him. As he looks it over, sees its plan and purpose, the joy woven into it, its marvelous growth, its heroism and strength, sees how it rises and presses towards God and the glory of God, how its evil works toward good, how divine love throbs through it, and divine power is under and over it, we can imagine him crying, "Put me into that world; let me live that life and earn its joy."

Even so did the Psalmist regard it when he cried in the fullness of his content: "I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

THE GOSPEL OF THE BODY.

" Then, soul, live thou upon thy servant's loss,
And let that pine to aggravate thy store ;
Buy terms divine in selling hours of dross ;
Within be fed, without be rich no more."

SHAKESPEARE, *Sonnet* CXLVI.

" Life, — strong life and sound life, — that life which lends approaches to the Infinite and takes hold on heaven, is not so much a progress as it is a resistance." — *North British Review.*

" Kant makes virtue consist in self-government, Schleiermacher in self-development ; the former makes virtue a struggle, the latter a harmony. They form the outermost sea-marks of the great ocean of moral speculations, and the whole tide in different ages has rolled backwards and forwards between them." — *Review.*

" In the life of the church, as in all the moral life of mankind, there are two distinct ideals, either of which it is possible to follow, — two conceptions, under one or the other of which we may represent to ourselves man's effort after the better life. The ideal of asceticism represents that moral effort as essentially a sacrifice of one part of human nature to another, that it may live in what survives more completely ; while the ideal of culture represents it as a harmonious development of all the parts of human nature, in just proportion to each other." — WALTER PATER, *Marius, the Epicurean*, vol. ii. p. 136.

" The essential peculiarity of the Christian life is, that it is the complete harmony, the absolute synthesis, of both kinds of goodness." — REV. JAMES FREEMAN CLARKE, D. D.

THE GOSPEL OF THE BODY.

And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan, to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. — 2 CORINTHIANS xii. 7.

I THINK a good life of St. Paul would be the best possible exponent of Christian experience. I do not mean an external biography, for that we have; but a full transcript of his thoughts and feelings. If St. Paul had written confidential letters to a friend; if he had kept a sincere diary, if St. Luke had written down his conversation as they sat on deck in sea-voyages or traveled up and down in Asia, what a priceless treasure would have fallen to the church, — what a revelation of the Christian faith every believer would have had! But we have this in a greater degree than we suppose. These epistles of his are not theological treatises but genuine letters from one man to other men, full of personal feeling and experience, and not impersonal generalizations of truth; they show how the man Paul took in the gospel and how it worked in and through him. His personal experience is valuable because it was so natural. It was not clogged and colored by dogmatic and ecclesiastical notions such as enter into nearly

all later lives. The Christian Fathers undoubtedly have much to tell us in regard to Christian truth, but great allowance must be made for ecclesiasticism, which is no part of Christianity and is a great modifier of it. But in St. Paul there was nothing between him and the source of his faith; he felt and thought in response to a close and full vision of Christ. This truth worked in a great nature and in powerful ways; the lesson is large, and the movement of his mind is like the blowing of winds or the tread of armies.

This experience of the thorn in the flesh is both interesting and valuable, or would be, if we could come at it. But it has been buried under such a mass of comment and conjecture that the simple lessons it contains are hard to reach. The main object seems to have been to discover what the exact nature of the thorn was. The strife is typical of much study of the Bible, — infinite scrutiny of the form without much thought of the end. Now it matters little what the thorn in the flesh was; but how it pierced the apostle, how he bore it, and how it affected him are the real questions. Still it may be well to refer to these various theories, if for nothing else than to get rid of them. They have been of several kinds, and all have been urged with skill and force.

One is that it consisted in spiritual trials, — something that directly assailed his principles and faith. The view taken by the writers in the Romish Church is that he was beset by sensual temptations. This is the natural view of men who have turned their

whole lives into a needless conflict with the passions. What is bitterest and hardest to be put away by them must have been the particular trial of the apostle; so it is easy to think. His own description of it forbids us to accept this explanation; for, having prayed that it might depart from him, he concludes to abide by it and bear it as best he may, getting from it some compensating spiritual return. But he would not have treated a sensual temptation in this way. No good man says of such action of his nature: "It is my cross; I must bear it patiently," and ceases to pray against it. Not patient acquiescence, but unending conflict, is the rule here. Luther keenly and tenderly says of this view, "Ah, no, dear Paul, it was not that manner of temptation that troubled thee."

Another interpretation is that it was a temptation to unbelief. But as little would St. Paul have acquiesced in this. Doubt is indeed a thorn that pierces deep. To have a mind made to know God, and yet not be able to find him; to hunger after the truth, and yet not be sure of truth; to have eyes that rejoice in the light, and yet catch only glimpses, — this is well-nigh the keenest suffering a true man can feel. But it was not a temptation from which St. Paul suffered. He was preëminently and always a believer, a man of convictions. There was no cessation of belief when he drew nigh to Damascus; there was no increase of belief as he entered its gates; it had simply taken a new direction. We do not find in him any indication of that wavering and puzzled state of mind known as skepticism, — a que-

rying if all things may not be a delusion, a fear lest more light or wider experience may dispel present faith. From first to last St. Paul was a mighty believer, — "I know whom I have believed." No; St. Paul did not feel the ranklings of this thorn.

Another explanation is that he suffered from remorse for his past life, and especially for his part in the death of Stephen. But St. Paul had too true a conception of the gospel to give way to such a feeling. Remorse is one of the black and fearful things the gospel undertakes to destroy. It belongs to that worldly kingdom which the kingdom of heaven displaces. It is indeed according to nature to keep alive remorse for evil deeds, and the finer the spirit the more bitterly will one regard one's offenses. As such a spirit grows better, the more keenly will remorse bite it, outmastering the dulling power of time, and haunting the conscience with deathless power. When the noble Œdipus discovered his unmeant crimes, he put out his eyes, so that he might never behold in this world, nor in the next, the beings he had unwittingly sinned against: for that he had sinned unwittingly was no excuse to himself, nor did it assuage his remorse. This is the religion of mere nature, — evil generating endless sorrow in a pure heart. But the gospel reverses this process; it is a revelation of a love that forgives; it blots out; it washes away; it destroys the past; and so ends the wild play of remorse. It is a great and apparently hazardous thing thus to interfere between a man's evil and its penalty, to shut him off from its natural feeling. "Better let him suffer and learn,"

we say. But there is a gracious audacity in the gospel that dares to take a man out of the natural order of sin and penalty and remorse, and says, "I can save him in his integrity without remorse, if he will but let me have my way with him." St. Paul well understood all this. He did not forget Stephen, and the memory kept him humble, but it did not haunt him with remorse; it was no thorn piercing him in this way.

Another interpretation is that it was some external trial. The greatest trial, undoubtedly, he ever encountered was the opposition of the Judaizing party in the churches; and it never departed from him. He endured their relentless opposition to the end, and he fought them to the last, foreseeing that if they should prevail the church would share in the fate of the nation. This party had all those characteristics that have so often been repeated in the history of the church: blind adhesion to the past; the mistake of supposing that what is old is therefore venerable, and what is new is therefore dangerous; insensibility to the fact that God is continually revealing himself in new forms; exalting the letter above the spirit; dullness of spiritual vision; obstinacy mistaken for principle, and all penetrated with a hard, relentless spirit towards those who disagree with them. These things do not belong to one age, but ever hang on the skirts of God's advancing Church, a part of it in appearance, but in reality the antichrist. This party denied that St. Paul was an apostle, and that he had any right to speak for the church; it thwarted his influence, it slandered his

character, it misconstrued his motives and conduct, and all in the interest of what it called religion. This party insisted on retaining the Jewish rites; St. Paul determined to cut free from them, and to get the faith out of a provincial form into such shape that any Greek or Roman could take it at once into his reason and conscience without the entanglements of purely national customs. It was a life-long battle, in which the apostle won, or won at least the ends of victory, but it was a bitter conflict. It is to St. Paul that we are indebted for a gospel and a church universal in character, without local or temporal features, — a religion of the spirit and of freedom. But this conflict was not the thorn in his flesh; this was something more personal, something apart from his general work. The thorn was for his personal benefit, to counteract a special fault or tendency, an offset to what may be termed an excessive action of the spiritual nature. But it was of no advantage to St. Paul to encounter in every church he had formed a sanctimonious set — half stupid and half malicious — who attempted to put him down by clamoring for the good old Jewish ways; thus making it appear that he was devoid of piety and that they were full of it. This was a trial that could do him no good, nor correct any evil tendency in him; it simply worried and tired him.

It is thought by some that the thorn in the flesh was the physical persecutions he endured. But St. Paul elsewhere treats these experiences in a different way; they unite him to Christ; they are taken joyfully, and endured bravely, — a part of his lot as a soldier of Jesus.

We come nearer the probable truth in the suggestion that it was some physical ailment or infirmity. If the force of words is to be regarded, it is the flesh, the body, that suffers. There is something pathetic, and at the same time almost humorous, in the way in which suffering commentators have laid their ailments on the apostle. They have attributed to him diseases ranging from epilepsy to weakness of the eyes. Others insist on some personal defect, and their guesses have ranged from an insignificant personal appearance to a habit of stammering. The commentator finds some phrase in an epistle that bears him out, and so transfers to the apostle his own infirmity, — a trembling hand, a stammering tongue, weakened eyes, an unwinning address. Amusing, but more pathetic! What better can we do with some hindering infirmity or humiliating weakness than to bring it into such company, — drawn on in the simple delusion by the thought that if we share in the weakness of the great apostle, we may also share in his strength. It is some comfort to the preacher who stammers before an ungracious audience, or speaks with features distorted by nervous twitching, to think that it was even so with St. Paul. These hearts of ours are fond in their foolishness, and we are not quite strong enough to bear our trials alone. It takes something from pain to know that a great man has borne it; something from shame to know that one better than ourselves has felt it.

It is, however, now quite generally understood that by the thorn in the flesh St. Paul meant some

nervous ailment, fitful or constant, that detracted from his personal appearance and influence, and shut him off from the fields where he most desired to act. Thus it was both a humiliation and a grief to him. Further than this we ought not to go in our investigation, for the simple reason that St. Paul saw fit to take us no further into the privacy of his personal history. He was a man of too much refinement to speak of his disease in a close way, and it is not delicate in us to press our inquiries in that direction. It is a mean and vulgar characteristic of an age which deems itself refined that it leaves no privacy about any life. No great man dies but every confidential utterance and personal habit is dragged into light, and if a pathological history of his body can be added, so much the better; or rather, so much the worse, for this invasion of personal life is neither nice nor wise. St. Paul did not see fit to tell us from what disease he suffered, and so we will not attempt to fix it, even if we have the data. It was enough for his purpose, it is enough for ours, that we know he suffered from some incurable physical ailment, which was of such a nature in its effect and persistence that it became to him a source of spiritual strength.

If the real significance of the thorn in the flesh were put in a general way, it would be: physical evil a condition of spiritual strength. Such a thought at once stirs up question and denial. It seems to be contrary to the thought of the day; it looks off towards old-time asceticism, and to an ungenerous view of human life.

I put it in a general way rather than as a definite assertion, for as an assertion it needs to be largely qualified. It is a hazardous thing to claim that physical evil is of any true value to us. Can evil teach or bring us any good? Is there anything to be done with evil except to get rid of it? Is not a sound body the condition of a sane mind and also of a sane spirit? Are not body and spirit so related that if one is distempered the other is also? Affirmative answers to these questions may justly be expected. The matter becomes more puzzling when we remember that Christianity has for one of its ends the destruction of physical evil. It distinctly prophesies that there shall be no more pain." One of the most illuminating aspects in which Christ stood before men was as healing their diseases. If evil is a factor of good, if physical infirmity helps the moral nature, why does Christ set himself up as its destroyer?

Puzzling questions, I grant, which I cannot now stop to discuss as problems, but will speak of only in a practical light. Despite all that may be said with such force and justness on the other side, as a matter of fact we know that we get a great deal of good out of our evil. Suffering is a thing to be put out of the world as fast as knowledge and humanity can do it. There is not a diviner work man can do than to lessen pain, if he does it by destroying the cause; and yet pain teaches lessons of supreme value. One of the largest factors in any wise man's education is the mistake and misfortune and suffering of one kind and another that he has undergone. I am

aware into what a tangle such assertions lead us: evil to be put away, and yet necessary to virtue; evil, the child of ignorance, and yet the school of knowledge; pain, the fruit of sin and mistake, and yet the nurse of spiritual life; that which you must avoid the condition of what you must have. Here is contradiction and absurdity enough so long as we treat the subject in a speculative way, but when turned into facts they vanish. There is no contradiction between fact and philosophy, but we must remember that no theory of life covers life. We can always appeal from philosophy to life, from the explanation to the fact. In some higher court, in some age or world of clearer light, theory and fact will come into harmony. Meanwhile we must go by facts and let our theories wait, even if they mock us with accusations of folly.

Following the strict line of our subject, I speak now of the moral effect of bodily infirmity.

It cuts up our conceit and pride. It wrought in this way in St. Paul. One might ask, What is the relation between this pride in spiritual revelations and physical infirmity, so that one subdues the other? There is no natural bond, no traceable path, by which influence travels from one to the other; and yet we all know, as a matter of experience, that bodily infirmity is a very humbling thing. The central principle of pride and conceit is self-strength, — a strength without relations; the man fails to see that his excellence is a derived thing, that it comes to him from without. And this is what makes it evil and fit to be named selfish, for self is its central principle.

Now, nothing strikes such a blow at self as an experience of physical infirmity or suffering. Pain is a great humbler; weakness a still greater. When one is groaning from physical suffering, one does not indulge in self-gratulation. When a man cannot walk, he ceases to be proud. The pain and weakness reach far beyond the body, and strike at the mind and spirit. There is no logical reason why, when I suffer, I should be humble, but I am, — no reason, unless, indeed, this body was made to play upon the soul and teach it lessons. These lessons are not always lasting, but they are more so than we are apt to think; they exercise a general repressive influence. Our chief sin is pride, and our best grace is humility, — "mother of all virtues." Human life is ordered largely for keeping down one and fostering the other. Were pride not checked here and there, on every side and continually, it would destroy us. "He that is proud eats up himself," says the great moralist. Hence even the body is commissioned to aid in keeping it down, for the body has one strong hand that touches the spiritual nature, and when the body lapses into weakness it drags the soul wholesomely into the dust with it.

Bodily infirmity teaches a man to go carefully in this world of mischance, — this world from which chaos is not yet wholly expunged; it coördinates him to an uncertain world. Nothing is truer than that we know not what a day may bring forth. The main feature of human life is its uncertainty. There are great laws that carry it on and point to sure phases and conclusions, but there are also occult

laws and disturbing forces whose results cannot be calculated. I do not know what will happen to me to-morrow; I may not even be in this world to-morrow. And while I ought to live and act as though to-morrow were to be spent here, it is equally true that I ought to live and act as though I were not to be here to-morrow. We must not leave the uncertain feature out of life. But man tends to make himself at home here; to live as though he were to stay here forever. He builds, and gathers in, and heaps up, and says, "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, be merry;" not remembering that God may this night require his soul. There is indeed a great deal to make one feel safe and sure in this world. The heavens do not change and the earth abides forever. There is a tremendous assertion of life in our hearts that does not readily give way to a sense of mortality. It is not easy for any of us to realize that here "we have no abiding city," and that we must "soon fly away;" we can be made to feel it only through the body. It is by the body that we are linked to this sure order of nature and the world, and it must be by the body that we are taught we do not belong to nature and the world. Providence at times weakens and almost breaks the links of this chain to show that it will not forever hold us. When one is prostrated by sickness, or when one carries about a withered limb, or when some organ of the body does its duty imperfectly and gives token of it in pain and weakness, one realizes the frailty of that which holds him here.

It is well for us to know this, to be taught how frail we are. For it is not well to live in the world as though we were to stay in it forever; if it were, we should stay forever. We are not citizens here, but sojourners. We "tarry but a night." The places that now know us will soon know us no more. These are facts and features of human life, which it is not well to forget; for if forgotten we get to feel that earth is our home, and so grow earthly in our thoughts, and take on earthly hues. The immortal and eternal colors fade out, and we become mere denizens of the world, subdued to its complexion and quality.

Physical infirmity reveals to a man the fact that he himself is not a source of power, and the more general truth that the power of the world is outside of him; in other words, it teaches him that he is a dependent being.

Man undoubtedly has power, and the consciousness of it leads him to assert and maintain his place as the head of creation. There is not an animal but man is consciously its master; there is not a force that he is not bringing under his control. We speak of subduing nature. There is an instinctive feeling that we should have the mastery of the earth, and as a preliminary we are exploring it and discovering its peculiarities, mapping its deserts, sounding and dredging its seas, piercing its arctic darkness, and threading its labyrinths of tropical growth. Man is all the while striving in ways that express his power. There is an end of utility which is an excuse, but the real motive, the passion of his

labors, is to express his mastery. The pyramids were built for tombs, but back of this purpose lay the passion for achievement. The bridge that connects New York and Brooklyn — perhaps the greatest material work ever wrought — has for its object an easy and quick transit from one city to the other, but the inspiring force behind it was this undaunted and indomitable pride in achievement: here was something fit to be done; the difficulties were immense, but their very immensity was the reason they were overcome. The human mind brooks no challenge that implies weakness, and it is the glory of man that he does not admit an impossibility. If he cannot yet find a way, he conquers in his dreams. Thus he is insensibly led to pride himself on his power. What is so glorious to him as an intellectual being becomes a temptation to him morally. For, whether we understand it or not, when a man gets to feel that he is of himself a power, that he can do for the most part whatever he undertakes, he suffers injury in the region of the spirit. This sense of power generates a feeling of independence that closes the avenues of sympathy and mutual dependence which connect him with his fellows, and he becomes selfish, and proud, and hard. The temptation of wealth lies in the sense of power it begets; it tends to relieve its owner of that sense of dependence which is the basis of sympathy. There is nothing grander than this sense of power, but it carries with it a corresponding moral danger, and so it is a thing to be kept in check. Now, the logical way of restraining this tendency, the absolute method, is by

knowledge, thought. But man has not yet come to that point; the strong man is not yet wise enough to think himself into a true humility. The time may come when he will not need an outside discipline to correct his faults, but that day has not yet dawned. Nothing so well restrains the undue action of our nature in this direction as bodily infirmity. It has an empirical look; it seems like making a bad thing serve a good end. But for all that it is true. The whole relation of body to mind has an empirical look; there is nothing more illogical and unreasonable than the influence of the body upon the mind, that an aching limb should determine the quality of thought, but it is a fact, and facts are what we have to do with.

It is a magnificent thing for a man to have this sense of power, to feel that nothing on earth can stop the play of the mighty energies that throb with his blood, — a glorious thing, but dangerous. For his highest and complete good, a man must also know that he is weak and has no power. For in this feeling his sense of dependence upon God and fellow-men comes into play; and this is more and better than the sense of strength, which is always whispering, "Ye shall become as gods." We are not gods, and it is not well to think we are. We may be the head of creation, but we are not the head of all things. There is nothing that so surely and thoroughly undoes character as the belief that there is no power and intelligence above us, that we head the column of existence. Hence the most violent and arbitrary checks are put in the way of

such thinking; badges of weakness are wrought into our very body. We cannot forego a moment's breath of air; gravitation breaks our bones by a little fall; a misdirected atom clogs the life-current; a slight rise of the temperature of the body and great Cæsar "cries like a sick girl." We gird the earth with our railways and telegraphs, but all the while an impalpable gas is eating away our life. When we realize this, we change our tone of exulting strength for one of humble dependence which we feel to be truer and really higher.

An experience of physical infirmity gives one a certain wholesome contempt of material things.

As I say this, I hasten to qualify and explain it. Nothing that God has made is to be despised; least of all this body that now holds us. It has in it all the wonder and glory of creation, and is an epitome of all previous creations, — a harp of more than a thousand strings: so strong that it can level mountains; so fine that in its automatic skill it almost thinks; so nearly spiritual that we cannot see where sense joins thought; so coarsely material that chemical law runs riot in it; a mere forge for the fire of oxygen, yet so delicate that it reflects in every turn and gesture the spirit and temper of the mind; so one with us that if it is sound we can hardly fail of being happy, and if it is weak we can hardly fail of being miserable; so one with us that we cannot think of ourselves as separate from it, yet are conscious that it is no part of us, — such a thing as this is not to be despised nor treated otherwise than as sacred. We have hardly any more imperative

work than to secure for the body its highest possible vigor and health. How to feed and clothe and house it; how to use it; how to keep it safe from weakening and poisonous gases; how to secure that rhythmic action of its functions that turns physical existence into music, — this is the immediate question before civilization, the discussion of which will drive out much of the vice of society and revolutionize its systems of education. The gospel of the body is yet to be heard and heeded. But this gospel will go no further than to require such care and treatment of the body that it shall best serve the uses of the mind. It is worthy of the greatest care, but only that it may be the most supple and ready servant of our real self. It is, as St. Paul says, something to be kept under. It is all the while crowding to the head and front; it seeks to be master, and when it gets the mastery it is that fearful thing which turns on the mind and enslaves it, turns on the spirit and smothers it, and finally destroys itself, for so at last it works round. It is well, therefore, to have for it a certain wholesome contempt; to keep it down and within its lowly place; to know just how much is due to it, due to its appetites and passions. A very noble thing is the body, but also a very poor and weak thing. What is the body when it may fail me at any moment; when a little bruise or puncture of the skin will enlist all the attention of my being? What is the body when its hold on the mind is so weak that, on some slightest accident, it withdraws its grasp and lapses into corruption? I will think well of the body, but not too well. Hence

this experience of physical weakness and infirmity is left in order to help us keep a due balance between flesh and spirit.

There are great advantages in not being allowed to feel at home in the body. An animal life antagonizes a moral life. When we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord. Flesh and spirit play into and help each other, but they also contend against each other, and the conflict is wholesome. It is a great impediment to suffer weakness; it is a hard thing to halt in life's labor and lie down on a bed of sickness. But the worth of the experience is plain, it is a simple logic: the body is not always to hold us, and it is well to be reminded of it, to keep destiny in mind. The body is not in itself a source of power, and it is well to see it reduced to occasional weakness. It is not the master of our being, and it is well at times to see it stripped of a power it is always assuming. There is a strong tendency to make the body itself the chief end of existence. Ignorance is always doing this, and the worldly are always saying, What shall we eat, and what shall we drink? The rich are prone to indulge in a luxury that ends in a pampering of the body. These tendencies are constantly at work; they form in their reaction the basis of asceticism, which is but a false way of realizing a great truth. But to-day we have other influences tending to unduly exalt the body, such as the revival of Greek art, and the teaching of science in regard to the relation of the body to civilization. Art, in nearly all its schools, plays about the human figure; a certain school of literature has

no higher inspiration ; science, with intense but narrow vision, wisely, but not with profound discrimination, directs us to the physical basis of society, — all forgetful that man does not live by bread alone. For hunger may feed him ; blindness may give him light ; pain may bring peace ; the weakness of the body may be the strength of the spirit.

However it be with all this fine regard paid to the body by art and science and philosophy, a docile experience of life teaches us that it is good to bear burdens on our spirits, and to be pierced with thorns in our bodies. For all this finite order and encasement is a minister to the life which is eternal.

THE DEFEAT OF LIFE.

"Three great divines have from different points of view drawn out, without exhausting, the subtle phases of Balaam's greatness and of his fall. The self-deception which persuades him in every case that the sin which he commits may be brought within the rules of conscience and revelation (Bishop Butler); the dark shade cast over a noble course by always standing on the ladder of advancement (J. H. Newman); the combination of the purest form of religious belief with a standard of action immeasurably below it (Dr. Arnold)." — Dean Stanley, *Jewish Church*, vol. i. p. 211.

"Throughout we find in Balaam's character semblances, not realities. He would not transgress a rule, but he would violate a principle. He would not say white was black, but he would sully it till it looked black." — F. W. Robertson, *Sermons*, vol. v. p. 42.

"O purblind race of miserable men,
How many among us at this very hour
Do forge a life-long trouble for ourselves,
By taking true for false, or false for true!"
Tennyson, *Geraint and Enid.*

"There is no game so desperate which wise men
Will not take freely up for love of power,
Or love of fame, or merely love of play.
These men are wise, and then reputed wise,
And so their great repute of wisdom grows,
Till for great wisdom a great price is bid,
And then their wisdom do they part withal:
Such men must still be tempted with high stakes."
Henry Taylor, *Philip Van Artevelde*, i. 3.

THE DEFEAT OF LIFE.

Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his. — Numbers xxiii. 10.

Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness. — 2 Peter ii. 15.

Longing to die the death of the righteous, and yet loving the wages of unrighteousness: such is the contradiction in which this great character stands out.

Contradictory qualities pass without much notice unless they are moral. It does not surprise us that Cæsar was both lenient and severe; these traits may have been the gradations of one trait, or each may have been the dictate of his practical wisdom. But when we find him without belief in the gods and at the same time superstitious, we are puzzled and astonished. It is because a moral contradiction is wider and more violent than an intellectual one. There is an imperative demand in all minds that morality shall be entire, without flaw or break; so human nature pays its tribute to the reality and value of morality. Such contradiction in a great character awakens more surprise than when seen in an ordinary man. It belongs to greatness that it

shall be uniform, of one piece; it goes along with strength, and strength implies oneness and unity. Hence great men resist no imputation so emphatically as that of inconsistency. When the littleness or the contradiction shows itself, we say, Why does the greatness not turn on it and crush it out? So we might expect, but so it is not.

The story of Balaam has little interest for us until we uncover the man somewhat, and find out how great and brilliant a figure he was. It is then, when the range of his vision and the fervor of his prophetic spirit are fully seen, that his moral deflection begins to puzzle and astound us.

The Israelites, toughened physically and morally by their long sojourn in the desert, and now well consolidated into a nation, are beginning to emerge from their southern retreat, and to betray their designs upon the regions bordering on the Jordan. They have met and defeated the desert tribes, and are now threatening Moab which lies in their way. Balak, king of Moab, undertakes the defense of his territory, and, like a wise general, studies and adopts the tactics of his successful enemy. He has learned that the Israelites are led by Moses, a prophet of Jehovah, and that his prayers in the battle against Amalek secured the victory. He will see what of the same sort he can do on his side. Hundreds of miles away, near the head waters of the Euphrates, there lived another prophet of Jehovah, whose reputation filled the whole region. It does not concern us whether his gifts were on one side or the other of the line called supernatural; whether

his sagacity was merely extraordinary or was clarified by special, divine light. It is enough for us that he was great, keen and lofty in his vision, comprehensive in his judgment; that he had a high sense of his prophetic function, and was at first a man of integrity. Balak sends for him. The Israelites have a prophet; he will have a prophet. He sees in the battles hitherto fought a weight not belonging to the battalions, a spiritual force that won the victory; he will employ that force on his side. Moses is a prophet of Jehovah; his prophet also shall be Jehovah's. A very shrewd man is this Balak. Holding to the Oriental custom of devoting an enemy to destruction before battle, he will match his enemy even in this respect as nearly as possible. That a prophet should be found outside the Hebrew nation is simply an indication that God has witnesses in all nations; it denies the theory that would confine all light and inspiration to one chosen people. That Balaam comes from the ancient home of Abraham hints the possibility of a still lingering monotheism in that region. Though so remote, he probably knew all about the Israelites: their history from the patriarchs down, their exodus from Egypt, their religion, their development under the guiding hand of Moses, their power in battle, and the resistless energy with which they were slowly moving up from the desert with their eyes on the rich slopes of Palestine. He doubtless knew that this was not only a migration of a detached people, such as was now often occurring in Asia, but a migration inspired by a religion somewhat in keeping with his own. These

Israelites were not his enemies, and he could not readily be made to treat them as such. When the messengers of Balak come to him with their hands full of rewards, asking him to go and curse Israel, he weighs the matter well, devotes a whole night to it, carries it to God in the simplicity of a good conscience, and refuses to go. So far he seems a true man, acting from considerations of mingled wisdom and inspiration. The messengers retrace their long journey, but Balak sends again by more honorable men and doubtless with larger gifts. He is a shrewd man, and knows what sort of a thing is the human heart. He sends not only gifts, but promises of promotion to great honor, and all by the hands of princes, — a triple temptation ; flattery, riches, place. How often does any man resist their united voice ? Often enough he resists one of them ; flattery cannot seduce him, nor money buy him, nor ambition deflect him, but when all unite, — flattery dropping its sweet words into the ear, gold glittering before the eye, and ambition weaving its crown before the imagination, — who stands out against these when they unite to a definite end ? They had their common way with Balaam, but not at once. Such men as he do not go headlong and wholly over to the bad side in a moment. The undoing of a strong character is something like its upbuilding, a process of time and degree.

This time the messengers are detained that he may again consult God. He is very sure that he shall confine himself to the word of the Lord, but he himself, out of his own heart, has begun to enter-

tain the purpose of getting upon the scene of these glittering temptations. He proposes to remain a true man, but he enjoys the company of these honorable princes. He will remain a true man, but he would like to be near a king who can send such presents. He will remain a true man, but, once in Moab, his wit will stand him in hand better than in these dull regions where he dwells. His lofty utterances, soon to be spoken, showed that he was well aware that the fields of activity and greatness were westward. It is the old, old story of humanity, — dallying with temptation in the field of the imagination, bribing conscience with fair promises, yet all the while moving up to the forbidden thing. It is a history not seldom repeated. Oh, no! I shall never become a miser, but I propose to be exceedingly prudent. I shall never throw away my reputation, my character, but I will feed eye and ear and imagination with pictures of forbidden pleasure. I shall never become a drunkard, but I will drink in moderation. I shall never permit myself to be called a selfish man, but I will take good care of myself in this rough world. I shall never become dishonest, but I will keep a keen eye for good chances. Thus it is that men are passing to ruin over a path paved with double purposes.

Balaam now gets a different answer. The first time he is honest and open, and is told to remain; the next time he takes into the interview his own desires which are against his convictions, and a half-formed purpose, and he comes out of it with the answer he wants; desire has taken the lead of

conscience. He starts on his ill-fated journey, meets with strange, confounding experiences, — reflections of the moral confusion into which he has fallen, — experiences, however, that serve to steady and buttress him on his professional side, but are not able to prevent his fall as a man.

On reaching Balak, a remarkable interview takes place, the record of which appears in the prophecy of Micah; for this story took a strong and lasting hold of the Jewish mind, and pointed for it many a moral, as it does still. The king in his eagerness asks Balaam how he shall come before the High God, — with burnt offerings? with thousands of rams and rivers of oil? or shall I sacrifice my first-born? Any or all of these will I bring! Balaam replies in those lofty words, — the sum of all duty still, — "He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" He thus begins his relations with Balak at the highest point of duty of which he can conceive. It is not to the king that he speaks, but to himself, — a mighty effort to confirm himself in his integrity as he enters upon the doubtful business before him. So men who find themselves verging towards crimes will often bless themselves with a text, and hide themselves momentarily in the strongest towers of duty. Balaam and Balak are worlds apart in conception, but at bottom they are not far asunder. Robed thus in deceptive sanctity, Balaam enters upon the work in hand, and offers sacrifices thrice in succession upon points that

overlook the tents of Israel and their future home. His altars, built by heathen hands and kindled by strange fire, fill the air with smoke, — a proceeding designed to affect the mind of Balak; but when Balaam speaks, it is a blessing, and not a curse. He will please the king in the matter of sacrifice, he will make up by ceremony what he will lose by prophecy, but he has not yet reached the point of saying what he does not believe. He has trifled with his conscience; he has deceived Balak; he has opened himself to the approaches of avarice and ambition, but he has not sunk to the depth of lying. He has always cherished his prophetic gift, holding it in a choice and reverent way, and he will not dishonor it for any price. He is sadly wrenched, half wrecked in this doubtful undertaking, and he sees no good way out of it, but, come what may, he will not turn his back upon his whole life and deny the principles of his profession; no, not now will he do this, but he will do it in time. He has simply halted for a moment in a downward career. In this moment all the greatness of his character rushes into expression. The very means the king has taken to secure a curse provoke a blessing. As Balaam stands on the heights overlooking the numberless tents of Israel, — "as gardens by the river's side," — the history of the wonderful people and of their leader presses upon him and stirs his prophetic spirit; their history suggests their destiny; out of their past he constructs their future; their God is his God. He knows the force of the inspiration hidden in their hearts, and with what divine wisdom

they are organized; he sees with what resistless energy they have pushed their way so far, and their future is plain. The voice of his own insight and outlook and the voice of God agree. He cannot and will not speak against manifest destiny and eternal purpose.

There is something unspeakably sad in these three outbursts of prophetic fervor, as they come from the divided mind of this great man caught in the toils of evil and hastening to his doom. We are perplexed as well as saddened. How could such a man say such things? we ask. Easily enough; it could hardly have been otherwise. When a great man goes down morally, the words he last utters before the fatal step are often the best he ever spoke, — a truth illustrated by Shakespeare in Cardinal Wolsey. There is a certain vantage-ground for speech offered by evil as well as by goodness; standing on the summit of one, we see all the glory and beauty of the other, — never before so great as when it is receding forever. There is also no stimulus to the imagination, and even to the moral nature, like a disturbed conscience; it is an irritant to all the faculties, and leads each up to its highest expression. It was out of such a state that Balaam spoke, — his mind clear as if filled with divine light, his heart aching with conscious degradation and foreboding his doom. That matchless cry of devotion, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his," that has passed into the prayers of the ages, sprang to his lips not because he expected to die such a death,

but because there was creeping upon him the fear lest he should not so die. Nor did he so die, but in battle, fighting by the side of heathen warriors, their wages of unrighteousness in his hands, the guilt of horrible crimes on his soul, every principle he had cherished abandoned, the doomed enemy and victim of the nation he had blessed.

The parallel to his career is found in Macbeth, — the slow descent of a noble nature from heights of chivalric loyalty to the depths of a traitorous and brutal death-fight. The brilliancy of his genius, flashing out after the integrity of his moral nature has been lost, reminds us of Mr. Dimmesdale in the "Scarlet Letter," whom the author represents as preaching with a fervency and power such as he had never before shown, on the very day of the culmination in himself of his long-hidden crime. Hawthorne does not mean to represent Dimmesdale as a hypocrite; he is aiming to portray the subtler truth that the very process by which a great nature is ruined serves to call out the highest powers of the man. We are to think of Balaam as he stands on Pisgah blessing Israel, in no other light than as a great man, caught in the toils of evil, taking a farewell of himself, throwing up his past, his truth and honor; but before he parts with them and wholly joins hands with this Balak, he concentrates in one heroic utterance all the past glory and fidelity of his life, — a true man for one moment more, and then passes on, as if driven by fate, to the death he would not die.

There are several difficulties in the narrative which it is not well to pass by in any consideration of the man.

The first is the violent contradiction between the two answers received from God. The first time God tells him not to go; the second time he bids him go, but is angry with him because he goes. What does this contradiction mean? There is no meaning in it till we drop the external shell of the story, and look at the moral working of Balaam's mind, when all becomes orderly and natural. There is here no contradiction, as later on there is no miracle. Between the first and second asking there is a change in his moral attitude. In the first he is docile and obedient, and the voice of conscience, which is the voice of God, prevails and decides his conduct. He enters into the second already half won by Balak, dislodged from his old sympathies, restless under the comparison between his old life and that laid open to him. When men revolve moral questions in such a temper, they commonly reach a decision that accords with their wish rather than with their conscience. Balaam has abandoned the field of simple duty, — duty so plain that there is no need of second thoughts. It is clear enough that in no way could it be right to curse those whom God had blessed; this he well knows, and the spontaneous verdict of his conscience is God's first answer. But, brooding over the matter and sore pressed by temptation, he begins to contrive ways in which he may win the gifts and honors of Balak, and also remain an honest prophet. Here is his mistake. Duty is no longer a simple, imperative thing, but something that may be conjured with, a subordinate, mutable tool instead of an absolute law

Having thus blinded himself as to the nature of duty, there will no longer be any certainty in his moral operations; confusion of thought leads to confusion of action; in his own transformation he transforms God; he now hears God bidding him do what he desires to do. Still, at times, conscience revives, his judgment returns, and then he knows that God is angry with him for doing what he had brought himself to think he might rightly do. This is every-day experience put into this ancient story in a dramatic yet real way. When a man has thus trifled with himself and with his duty, God does indeed seem to say to him, "Go on in your chosen course." He serves God in the externals of religion, but in business cheats and lies in what he calls business ways, and grinds the faces of the poor under some theory of competition, yet God prospers him; no hindering word comes to him from Providence or from the insulted spirit of truth. It may be better, it may be, in a certain sense, the command of God, that one who starts on such a path shall follow it to the end, and find out by experience what he has rejected as an intuition. With the froward God shows himself froward. When Israel set up idols, God answered them according to idols. A *laissez-faire* theory of social economy brings temporary prosperity, which is interpreted as the approval of Heaven, — the idol answered according to itself. To those who have pleasure in unrighteousness God sends a strong delusion that they should believe a lie. This is the concrete way of stating how the moral nature acts when it is led by double motives. It comes into

bewilderment; it gets no true answers when it appeals to God; its own sophistries seem to it the voice of God. It can no longer tell the voice of God from its own voice. "Fair is foul, and foul is fair."

The next difficulty encountered is the strange story of the dumb ass rebuking the madness of the prophet; a strange story indeed until we get at its moral equivalents, when it no longer seems strange, but simple, every-day truth. With the form of the story we have little to do. But few persons will consider it worth while to pause long upon it; or they will but study it as an illustration of the way in which the ancient Oriental mind embodied subtle moral processes for which it had not yet found any direct method of expression. The scene lies in the infancy of the world, and the speech is as of an infant, but, as in the speech of infants, there may be truth that our dull ears cannot hear. If any consider it necessary to have some theory of it in order to save the letter of Scripture, there is no objection; only let no theory of literalism or zeal for miracle rob the story of its moral value. The thing signified is very plain, and may be read apart from any theory. Balaam is doing what he knows he ought not to do; there is a great wrong in his heart sending up its protests to the brain. The man is at cross-purposes, and vents his unrest and ill-feeling upon outward objects. How often it happens! One in ill-humor often curses the tools he is using, — the dullness of a saw, the waywardness of a shuttle, the knife that wounds his hand; he beats his horse or dog; he scolds his children. Here we come nigh the

very heart of the story. When, in some fit of ill-temper brought on by our own wrong-doing, we have beaten an animal, or spoken roughly to a child, and then have noticed the humble patience of the brute under our anger, or the meek undesert of the child reflected from its upturned eyes, there comes over us a sense of shame and an inward confession that the wrong is not in the brute or in the child, but in us. The beast or the child speaks back to us; its very bearing and looks become audible voices of rebuke. When a great man like Balaam gets involved in wrong-doing, all nature is changed to him, and from all things come rebuking voices. When Macbeth returns from the murder of the king, a simple knocking at the gate appalls him and deepens the color of his blood-stained hands; one sense runs into and does the office of another. To a harassed and guilty conscience, the light comes with a condemnation; every true and orderly thing meets it with reproof, — angels of God that confront it, but do not turn it from its fatal course. Balaam would have turned back, but he is told to go on. This is only another stage of the moral confusion into which he has fallen. He would go back, but the spirit of sophistry again begins to work, and he goes forward, but he will speak only the true word, — evil drawing him on, while he excuses it with the plea of right intentions, — a daily history on every side! Why did Balaam not go back? He could not. When a man does wrong in a simple and impulsive way under the direct force of temptation, he can retrace his steps; but when he has found what seems to him a safe

path to a coveted end, he seldom gives over. Many men with scrupulous consciences do not regret being yoked with partners who are less particular; and many men do as a corporation what not one of them would do as an individual. Balaam could not avail himself of these modern methods, and so made a partnership and corporation of his own divided nature, — reaping speedily in himself the bitter consequences of such action that overtake the modern man slowly but no less surely.

There is also a certain fascination in evil that draws men on, — a truth that Dickens has illustrated in so many of his pages, even as we find it in every-day life, — persistence in evil courses when apparently nothing is to be gained, a return to them after they have been abandoned, a blind daring of the penalty bound up with them, contempt for experience. There is a sound doctrine named "the perseverance of the saints," founded on its human side on a passion for goodness when once tasted. There is a corresponding truth in the kingdom, of evil — a perseverance of evil-doers, resting on the fascination of evil; for evil gets its power largely from a certain play of fine qualities that it calls into action. It challenges the will to a trial of strength; it resents the plain ploddings of virtue; it delights in the novelty of strange experiences, in the uncertainty that attends its course, and in the pseudo-knowledge uncovered by forbidden things. It is the immortal mistake! Its history and doom are written over and over again, — in the Edenic traditions, in this great character fascinated by a doubtful career pic-

tured in his imagination while distant from its scene, and drawn into a field of action where "he would not play false and yet would wrongly win;" written again and again in the lives of many great and even good men, who set their minds upon ends before they fully consider methods; found also in organized schools and bodies who are governed by the maxim that the means justify the end, in governments that strive to save themselves by compromise with evil, in churches that decline to protest against popular sins in order to secure revenues, in communities that license evils under the plea of restraining them, in trials for heresy that cloak personal hatred under zeal for the truth, in societies that wage theological strifes under the plea of fulfilling a trust.

This history will always attract the moralist for the fineness with which it outlines the fall of superior natures. It shows not how the weak and ignorant and besotted sin, but how the strong, the would-be good, the brilliant, and even the wise are betrayed into evil. It shows also that the end and doom reached is the same with that of gross and vulgar sin. It illustrates the folly of trying to mix up good and evil, of striving at the same time to do right and wrong, — doing right in one part of the life and wrong in another, doing a bad thing and excusing it by a good motive or by coupling it with a good action. It shows also how one may observe all the outward forms of good conduct and cherish its purpose, and yet stand on the brink of perdition. Balaam will not lie for all the gold the king could

give him; he will do nothing without getting what seems to him the divine sanction; he is full of religious fervor and expression, but in and behind it all is a self-seeking spirit that feeds upon and dominates over his virtues. He illustrates that worst of all sins, the perversion of sacred gifts, — the only sin for which our Lord showed no pity and upon which he pronounced the condemnation of hell. He illustrates the history of such sin. When his veracity and prophetic fervor no longer serve him, he drops to base and horrible methods; his virtues, falsely held and used, become the snares that lure him to his fate and deepen his doom.

The thing that is all the while surprising us is the collapse of fair characters: the good man, the trusted man, the honorable man, in an hour stands out a perjurer, a thief, a liar; but in every case it will be found first that he had no tap-root of character, and then that he was moved by a double purpose. On such a foundation no man can long stand. Some wind of chance or blow of circumstance assails him, some thread of suspicion trails behind him, some crisis closes in upon him, and he passes to the ever-sitting judgment that uncovers and separates him into his two selves. Character and conduct must rest on one and the same foundation, and they must be of one piece.

The whole emphasis of Scripture is thrown upon singleness of heart and against double-mindedness. There can be no service of God and mammon; no man can serve the Master and go first to bury the dead; first and always must one seek the kingdom

of God; whatsoever is not of faith is sin; do all for the glory of God; only the pure in heart see God; the gates of the heavenly Jerusalem are each one pearl, — one entrance only into eternal life.

Christian teaching has not yet enough emphasized the grace of simplicity or single-mindedness. It is left secondary, or dropped into a lower category, as not quite spiritual, or as not being an element of saving faith. We have failed to see that it is the expression of the unity of God, and that it is both the substance and essence of the Christ character; that in nothing else is Christ so one with God as in the absolute simplicity in which he was grounded, his whole being moving in the one straight line of truth, his eye ever single and never wandering to take in an opposite motive, bearing witness to the truth, and for that end alone is he in the world, making no bargains with conscience, saying and doing the one thing that is right and true. "Yea and nay," not something between or of both, — that is his rule of conversation. Doing what he sees the Father do, — that is his rule of conduct. Looking with a single eye for the path of daily duty, — that is his guide. Bearing witness to the simple truth, stating things as they are and acting as he speaks, though it takes him to the cross, — that is his history. He is no casuist weighing motives. He knows no doctrine of expediency that involves morals. He would not have mingled one drop of falsehood with an ocean of truth to have saved the world; he could not thus have saved it. The church has not yet measured Christ in this attitude. It has heeded the truth he

spoke but not the Truth he was, forgetting that the truth spoken has value and power only because he is himself its embodiment. Were he fully recognized in this supreme attitude, what an upturning would it cause in many a life, many a pulpit and church and synod! For the primal lie — good for eye and taste and making wise as gods — is still the deceiver of mankind. An alloy of evil to make good current, — that is the fallacy which underlies a great deal that calls itself right in this world.

A spirit of simplicity, truthfulness, life all on one side and of one piece, life without any sort of lies, — there is nothing a man should so strive after as this, for he is striving after vital air — for the life of the soul itself.

THE TWO PRAYERS OF JOB.

"He that lacks time to mourn, lacks time to mend.
Eternity mourns that. 'T is an ill cure
For life's worst ills to have no time to feel them.
Where sorrow 's held intrusive and turned out,
There wisdom will not enter, nor true power,
Nor aught that dignifies humanity."

HENRY TAYLOR, *Philip Van Artevelde*, i. 5.

"Present unhappiness is selfish; past sorrow is compassionate.

"The man knows only how to say 'sorrow;' the Christian, better informed, says 'trial.' Trial! that word explains man, evil, Christianity, expiation, heaven, God.

"The heart which has wept much resembles the rock of Horeb, which is now dry, but preserves the mark of the waters which gushed from it in days of yore.

"At the bottom of every man there is an abyss which hope, joy, ambition, hate, love, the sweetness of thinking, the pleasure of writing, the pride of conquest, cannot fill. The whole world cast into that abyss would not satisfy it; but, O my God! a drop, one single drop, of your grace causes it to overflow." — JOSEPH ROUX, *Meditations of a Parish Priest.*

THE TWO PRAYERS OF JOB.

And it was so, when the days of their feasting were gone about, that Job sent and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt offerings according to the number of them all; for Job said: It may be that my sons have sinned, and renounced God in their hearts. Thus did Job continually. — JOB i. 5.

And the Lord turned the captivity of Job when he prayed for his friends. — JOB xlii. 10, Rev. Ver.

THESE two quotations describe two prayers of Job; the first offered in the days of his prosperity, before his great lesson in suffering had been entered upon, and the last after it was ended.

Prayer not only distinguishes the good man from the bad, but it also marks the grades of character in a good man. Job was always unimpeachable in his integrity, irreproachable in his conduct, merciful in his spirit; but he was a very different man at the last from what he was at the first. His trial was not a test of the firmness of character already won; nor was it sent merely to confirm him in his character, but to develop a higher quality of character. The kind of man he was, and the kind of man he became, are indicated in these two prayers.

Notice first his prayer for his sons. The picture of Job at the outset is that of unbounded prosperity

combined with the highest integrity and complete domestic happiness. He was a prince, — none greater in all the East; he was rich in all that made riches in those days, — sheep and camels and oxen and she-asses; he had a great retinue, and, to crown all, a family perfect after the Eastern ideal, — seven sons and three daughters, — sons enough to strengthen his own house, and daughters enough to form alliances with other princes. So rich, so happy, are they all, that they give their days to continual feasting, filling the week with their alternate visits, including also their sisters, — a practice contrary to Oriental custom. And so these happy children of a good father spend their time, — rejoicing in one another, and in the prosperity of a father who can so endow their houses. The picture, you perceive, is not painted to the life, but to the ideal of life. We are not here reading actual events; we are looking upon the background of a picture of a great moral experience. But the picture is not finished until we behold him covering this life of his children with the protecting mantle of his prayers. He knows already what he will some day know better, — that prosperity has its dangers. His sons are good, and their feasting is innocent; but he feared lest they should forget God in it, and fall away from religious conceptions of life. What he thus feared as the result of prosperity was the same thing that afterward came to him in his misery. Prosperity may tempt us to forget God, and wretchedness may lead us to curse him. And so Job every week offered burnt offerings, presenting thus

his children to Heaven sanctified and cleansed from any possible fault or casual sin. Notice again this ideal picture, and see how perfect and beautiful it is: riches without stint, domestic love, joyousness without break, — all flowing out of a father's bounty, and redeemed from all possible evil by a father's prayers, — earthly happiness, tender affection, and careful piety combined into a perfect whole.

And this is what we all admire, what we all would have and do. What other way of life is there for a sensible man to follow but to strive for prosperity, to surround himself with love, and to redeem it from evil with piety, — the necessary and rational aim and course of life in this world? Only let no man think that is all or enough; and, lest we shall be tempted to think it all or enough, God often sweeps away our prosperity, and carries us off into other regions of life and blessedness.

Yet, as this picture lingers in our vision, who can but delight in and approve it? Its beauty, its agreement with the tenderest and sweetest sides of human nature, its fulfillment of all that the heart craves, its grace of piety so charm us that we say: Would that my life were such!

So it is until life is opened up to us in its deeper meanings and objects, until the heavens also are opened and the powers of an endless life descend upon us. Then we see the defects of this picture, and of the life it depicts. For, after all, what is Job thinking of and doing, and aiming at? Merely the enjoyment and wise use of his prosperity. He has got him all these flocks and herds, these sons and

daughters, and he puts them into relations of enjoyment, — sweet and real indeed, — while he stands by and prays Heaven that it may not be marred nor interrupted. His whole life is within the circle of his own prosperity; his piety does not reach beyond the field of this prosperity; his prayers rise for his children as they go their happy ways. He is perfect and upright, just and merciful, but all this is an element, and perhaps a cause, of his prosperity. The whole argument of the book turns on the fact that Job was free from fault, and did not deserve the evil that came upon him. I confess that it is not easy to put the finger on the flaw, or lack, or need in him that justifies his trial. It can only be explained by referring it to the mysterious way in which God sees fit to deal with men. Only this we can say: that God cannot fulfill his purpose with man in the field of prosperity, where there is always occasion for the question: Do we serve God for naught? That is, there is a temptation to serve God, not for himself, but for the sake of the prosperity. While the ostensible object of the book is to refute the idea that all suffering is deserved, its real object is to show that piety, in its high sense, is not perfected in the field of prosperity. And it never is; Providence coöperates with grace, and what we call prosperity in the ordinary sense — full, lasting, universal — is not the portion of human life. The flocks and the herds may remain, but something dearer than these is taken away; or riches and family may be spared, but darts of secret trouble find their way into our hearts; or, if these

troubles stand aloof, over us hangs our mortality, whose touch ever threatens to burst the bubble of prosperous life. It is not a morbid fancy, but a simple fact, that prosperity cannot ripen character. In that sphere it cannot be made evident to others or to ourselves that we are not serving God for a reward. Hence the trier of life — the messenger of God — goes walking up and down the earth, jostling men out of their prosperity, and driving them into worlds of poverty and loss and sorrow and disease and loneliness, where they can test their principles and find out what they believe, what they stand on, and what they are living for. This is not Job's history alone: it is yours and mine and every man's.

We turn now to his second prayer, offered when his great lesson in life had been gone through. The Sabeans have swept away his oxen and asses; lightning has consumed his sheep; the Chaldeans have stolen his camels; his servants have been slain; a whirlwind has killed his children at their feasting. All this he endures in the highest spirit of submission: "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." But submission is not a high grace. Job enforces it by a bit of rather stern but fair logic: "Naked was I born, and naked shall I go hence." Who can complain of that? It is nature circling round to its beginning: as well complain of being born naked as of dying naked. Submission at its highest point touches only the lowest in true character, the field of which does not lie in the will of God, but in the love of God. Submission to the Divine will has no

value except as it leads into the Divine sympathy. Job's losses did not take him there. Like a God-fearing man, and with a great deal of a man's strength, he stands up against all this heavy buffeting, firm in himself and his principles. And so the trial is brought closer, even to his body, and into the deepest recesses of his own heart and mind. For, say what we will about it, the lessons of Providence do not wholly reach and cover us, they do not get down to the inmost centre of self, until we ourselves, in our personality, are involved in them. God cannot say to us through another what he can say to us in ourselves. We may love another more than self, and that other one may be taken away from us through sufferings that we would gladly have borne, and the lesson may be of priceless value; still, when God would speak his uttermost truth to us, when he would communicate to us his highest secret, — namely, his love for others, — he must speak it directly into our own ear, and through our own personal experience. Only as these springs of personal life are touched and pressed will they respond to the Divine word. Job had lost all that he had; but still between his losses and God there was himself, strong in will, sound in body, hedged about by the consciousness of his integrity. God had come very near to him, but not into him; he must get inside of this image of himself, behind his will and down into that self-love which is the ultimate field of the Divine action; he must take possession of this royal citadel of the body, and send his messengers of humbling pain along the nerves, and turn

the veins into channels of loathsomeness, and make him a contempt unto himself, — his will and strength and pride and self-complacence swept away from him even as his flocks and children had been: then Job could say: —

> "I had heard of thee by the hearing of the ear;
> But now mine eye seeth thee."

It is under such conditions that he is able to think out his great question, and repel the sophistries that thought is always forcing upon us when it draws upon speculation instead of interrogating life itself. Job's friends discoursed upon life as they thought it was; he, as he knew it and felt it. There is no philosophy of life but the experience of it; there is no knowledge of God until, in some way, we come completely into his hands. Sin and need and sorrow may drive us there, but only life itself, in all its length and depth and vicissitude and final emptiness, can fully place us there.

There is more in the book of Job than is found in the line of its argument, which is a vindication of Providence in the matter of suffering. There is also to be found in it the *effect* of suffering. Hence, when Job emerges from his trial, we find him a different man, and standing in a different environment; he himself has been enlarged, and so he is set in a larger field. He is no longer within the narrow, happy circle of his family; his brethren and sisters, and all that had been of his acquaintance, come about him, and bemoan his troubles and comfort him. O, how true is the heart of man to man when he is true to God! They give him gifts of money

to rebuild his estate, and rings of gold for the renewal of his princely condition. He comes again into prosperity, but not as the same man. Now he knows what prosperity is, and what it is for. By having it and by losing it, down even to the loss of himself, he has found God, and, having found God, he may safely regain prosperity. The book has been thought to drop below the highest ethics, and to play into the Jewish conception of prosperity as the earthly reward of piety, because it leaves Job where it found him. But its thought runs deeper. Its ethics are of the universal sort; there is in them little of place and time, this world or any other; they are eternal in their nature. Prosperity is not, indeed, the reward of piety, but it is eternally true that the meek inherit the earth; that all things are ours; that we are joint heirs with Christ in the universe of God. In Job, this great truth is dramatically set forth under the conditions assumed in the story.

But the point where we most clearly see the change in Job is in his prayer for his friends. Then his captivity of suffering and trial is turned. At the outset, he prays for his family, — a narrow circle; but when he has passed through his mighty lesson, he prays again, — for his friends, so called, but no friends. They had come to him as such, but they proved themselves miserable comforters. Their words had only increased the perplexities of his struggling heart; their unjust reproaches had but stung him with keener pain, and driven him into a farther isolation from his fellows. Instead of enter-

ing into his sufferings with true sympathy, they made them the text for their sophistries, and a foil for the play of their shallow theories. His condition is to them not an occasion for help and pity, but for speculation. They are much more concerned for God's character than for the sufferings of God's child; more fearful that the foundations of their theology may be disturbed than that Job may perish under the heavy hand of God, — an old picture, but steadily reproduced in the church as, age after age, it wrangles over its theodicies while humanity groans and perishes unhelped. Their conduct produced its legitimate effect upon Job: You are very pious, and very careful of God's government, but you seem to think little of me; you know all about God's ways and plans, but you know nothing of what I think and suffer, and so I consider that you know nothing about God; your system is very correct, beautifully proportioned; one part follows from and upholds another; the logic is exact and faultless, but I have found out in my experience that it is not true; it does not cover my case; I am willing to suffer under the unexplained providence of God, but I protest against being made a text for your dogmatic opinions; you seem to be right, but the whole creation of God is against you.

Job's feeling is the reflection of God's, whose wrath was kindled against these men; but it was a transient feeling, and passed away as he emerged from his trial. When he had come to see God with his eye, and had humbled himself in dust and ashes, there was no place left in him for wrath and

reproach. God be thanked that a time comes to all when hatred dies out! Job had lost everything, — even himself; but he had found his human heart, and it began to beat in charity and love for others, and even for his miserable comforters. Then, and in that, and because of that, his captivity was turned. When he is moved to pray for these friends, he has learnt the lesson God had set him. He finds, in the consciousness of such love and devout solicitude, the solution of the great question that had been vainly discussed with words and human knowledge. A new feeling towards men, begotten by bitter experience, has revealed God to him, and removed all perplexity arising from the course of Providence. And so it is that, when life and its suffering take us into fellowship with Christ and his love, all questions are settled for us, — settled, that is, by a practical enforcement of the Divine love, but unsettled so long as we make them a matter of speculation and theory.

It is not difficult to imagine what the prayer of Job was like. He has found truth, and it is so sweet and nourishing that he prays these men may also find it. He has gained a vision of God, and it is so clear and satisfying that he prays it may be revealed to those who are sure they know all about it. Was the prayer answered? Doubtless, but only as they were led through some such experience as his own; for life, with its labor and burden and loss and suffering, is the only medium through which the knowledge of God can come to us. Hence the Incarnation; hence the Son made perfect through suf-

fering; hence fellowship with Christ as the only way of oneness with the Father.

At the risk of some possible repetition, I will now speak, in a more general way, of the effect of suffering as it is woven into human life, — not exceptional or great suffering, but that inevitable measure of it which is wrapt up in ordinary experience.

It works toward enlarged sympathies.

Nothing really opens the mind and heart of man but suffering. The law, or its analogy, is wrought into all nature, and at last God is presented to us suffering in his Son. A man cannot think his way into large sympathy with his fellow-men. No study, no effort of will, no practice of benevolence, can bring us into a true humanity. While we are prosperous and happy, we think chiefly of ourselves. Imagination, even, cannot overleap the walls of happy circumstances. We must suffer in ourselves before we can truly love others; and we must suffer greatly before we can love widely. Suffering alone will sting and spur this sacred feeling into genuine activity. Why it is so, we may not be able to tell, unless it be that only thus do we gain a thorough knowledge of ourselves. A heavy sickness will teach one more psychology than all the books can. Getting thus some true and full sense of self, and finding out what a precious thing the soul is, and how it can feel and suffer and rejoice, we reach a path that leads divinely to others. There is in the heart of man a secret chamber where God has put all humanity, and himself also: touch its door with the hand of suffering and it flies open, and man finds himself

one with all others, and God himself in the midst of them. This is the truth of the Incarnation; hence the Lamb of God eternally slain; hence he who loved the whole world could only love it by suffering in and with and for it.

Suffering is a mystery and it is not a mystery, — a mystery in the sinless brute world, in the babe that wails out its little life in agony, in faultless men and women who serve God all their days and suffer in them all. It is a mystery as it travels by sure cause along the generations from some ancestral source; it is a mystery when we see it dissociated from fault or desert, or issuing from ignorance or from the forces of nature. A mystery, but perhaps the key to all truth; for, if it unlocks the heart of God so that he becomes Love, and if it melts the hearts of men so that they flow together in sympathy and welds them into one mighty, mutual force of redeeming effort, then it is no longer a mystery, but the very light of truth and the solvent of all things. Under such a conception, its presence in the innocent brute world, in little children, in the good and faithful, only seems to show that it cannot be kept out of any part of the creation, because it is the key to the whole creation.

Suffering, especially when it is great, and is undeserved by sin, tends to create a clearer and deeper sense of God.

When it is not great, it is simply endured, — matched by human will and patience; but when it is long, severe, and heavy, it rouses the mind to thought, and, by opening up self, opens also a way to God.

When it is deserved, when it follows fault and sin, it simply reveals a law of nature, and God as a law-maker, — things well to be known, but not the best and highest. But when it is undeserved, — as in the case of Job, — the very mystery and strangeness of it send us off to God by a necessity of our nature. For, when we cannot explain a thing, and if it is something real, something that touches us closely, something that forces us to cry, Why? we are driven, because we cannot find out the *why*, to carry it up to God and there leave it. There is but one place where the insolvable questions of life can be left, — at the feet of God; a rational thing to do, for he who is over and in all things must have in himself the explanation of all things. This is the argument in the book of Job. God turns his mind to the natural world, — to the stars, to the rain and dew and lightning, to the brutes, — and confounds him by the mystery in these things that are under his eye and hand. Their explanation is only to be found in God: "Hath the rain a father? Or who hath begotten the drops of dew?" Take, then, this other and nearer mystery of suffering to God, and there leave it. Thus Job is led up to the great act and state of trust. He did not know and could not find out why he suffered; he had done nothing to deserve it; there was no chain of cause and effect in it; the elements and foreign enemies had smitten him, — not his own sins. And so he is sent on a blind search after the reason. The tendency was twofold: to atheize him, to lead him to curse God and die, and so end his groaning misery,

or to follow the better clue till he could see God as with his eye, and at last could say: "Though he slay me, yet will I wait for him. I know that my redeemer, my vindicator, liveth. Here upon this dust-heap where I sit, exiled from the city, while my very skin and flesh fall away from me, I shall see God for myself, — not through your eyes, but mine own." When a man can reach a confidence like this, and in such a way; when he has thus learned to put the perplexity and hardness and bitterness of life on one side, and God on the other as the sure solvent and cure, he has come very near to God. He no longer cries, "Oh that I knew where I might find him!" Instead, he says, "Now mine eye seeth thee." Thus he becomes humble and docile, ready to hear the vindication that is pressed in upon him by the very nearness of God.

To trust is the longest step God-ward that any of us can take. We cannot by searching find out God; we can only put ourselves where God can come to us. He who trusts, who believes, knows God. Faith is the path between heaven and earth quite as much as between earth and heaven; as necessary to God for reaching us as to us for finding him. The divine currents run hitherward first, — along the path of God-containing whirlwinds it may be,— and the faith that can respond under such disclosure of him is that which finds him.

Suffering also tends to bring us into new relations to men. It does this because it has brought us into full relations to God. Suffering man and God and humanity are united by one golden chain.

When Job has found God, and so begun to think and feel in God-like ways, he begins to think of and feel towards men as God does. His captivity is turned when his heart turns in pity and yearning desire to these associates who had not been taught and illuminated in his school. God stops short of nothing else with us. We may be humbled till our pride is gone, bruised till the will is meek, chastened till we are obedient; we may be disciplined into reverence and sober thought and virtuous conduct: but God is not content with these, nor with anything but a love for man like his own. Then our captivity of worldly life, of crushing trouble, of dissolving happiness, of bitter perplexity, of unsubdued spirit, of rebellious complaint, is turned. God, indeed, we need for trust, but equally we need humanity for love and service. There must be a real field for the play of our redeemed powers, as there must be for the discipline of our unsanctified nature. This field is not God, nor heaven, nor our own souls, but this world of men about us.

It is not in vain, my friends, that you are called to pass through great trials and sufferings. They never leave you what they found you; God forbid they should! But how you bear them, what they make of you, what they lead you to do and to feel, will vary according to your own attitude to them. Their trend and purpose are towards those two poles of duty, God and humanity; but it is our weakness and fault that often we do not read aright their meaning. Suffering may leave us hard, selfish, and complaining, or it may lead us into the mysteries of

eternal Providence and into the very fellowship of God. There is one thing we cannot do with it: we cannot wholly explain it; we cannot find out on what principle it is allotted. A part of it is in the line of cause and effect, — sin yielding misery; a part is disciplinary, — the necessary school for ignorance; but there is more that has no such explanations. The good suffer almost more than the evil, and there is such a thing as happy ignorance, — the very simplicity of its conditions warding off evil consequences. A vast amount of suffering is due to natural causes, — lightning and whirlwind and torrent, — that affect good and bad alike. A foul miasma poisons a saint as soon as a sinner, and an earthquake shakes alike the foundations of churches and brothels. But this much we can say of suffering, — that it unlocks the mysteries of spiritual life, and sets the moral forces of our nature in action. It teaches us the oneness of humanity, the power of sympathy, the sweetness of love. It is not well to ask why we suffer; we may get no answer. Certainly we will get no full answer until we experience its effects. Using it thus, we find ourselves launched into universal sympathies and filled with yearning thoughts for our fellows. The children in the street become dear to us as our own. The poor cry to us, and not in vain. The Samaritan becomes our neighbor, and our neighbor as ourself. Then we can pray for our enemies and bless those that curse us. Thus the mystery of it dies out; its perplexity vanishes in the great light that comes dawning upon us; we find ourselves transported away from the field of its external cause

and process into that spiritual world where we behold God himself suffering in his Son, and so redeeming the world out of all its evil, and preparing the day when there shall be no more pain, and all tears shall be wiped away.

TRUST AND RIGHTEOUSNESS.

"Ask and receive, — 't is sweetly said;
Yet what to plead for know I not;
For wish is worsted, hope o'ersped,
And aye to thanks returns my thought.
If I would pray,
I 've nought to say
But this, that God may be God still.
For him to live
Is still to give,
And sweeter than my wish his will.

"'All mine is thine,' the sky-soul saith;
'The wealth I am must thou become;
Richer and richer, breath by breath, —
Immortal gain, immortal room!'
And since all his
Mine also is,
Life's gift outruns my fancies far,
And drowns the dream
In larger stream,
As morning drinks the morning star."

DAVID A. WASSON, *All 's Well.*

"Why shouldst thou fill to-day with sorrow
About to-morrow,
My heart?
One watches all with care most true,
Doubt not that he will give thee too
Thy part."

PAUL FLEMMING.

"Enjoy the blessings of this day, if God sends them, and the evils of it bear patiently and sweetly: for this day is only ours; we are dead to yesterday, and we are not yet born to the morrow. But if we look abroad, and bring into one day's thoughts the evil of many, certain and uncertain, what will be and what will never be, our load will be as intolerable as it is unreasonable."

JEREMY TAYLOR.

TRUST AND RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Take therefore no thought for the morrow. — St. Matt. vi. 34.

The force of the word "therefore" in this phrase reaches back over a considerable portion of Christ's discourse. Why we need feel no anxiety for the future, and how to surmount it, is his theme. In an extended illustration, he turns our thoughts to certain facts that show the needlessness and the futility of this anxiety. The fowls are not anxious, yet they are fed; and you are better than they, better worth the care of the Heavenly Father. The lilies are more gorgeous in their glory than Solomon, but a man is more beautiful in the eyes of God than a lily, and will more surely be cared for. Besides, what is the use of anxiety? It betters nothing, it alters nothing. Your life is not going on under conditions that may be varied or improved by anxious forethought; it is rather going on under conditions like those of your body. You cannot, by such thought, add a single cubit to your stature, nor can you add anything of real value to your life by anxiety. Drop it, says Christ; seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and you will get all you strive after with such fret and care; this

is the true method. He closes his argument with a bit of massive wisdom that well-nigh covers the whole philosophy of life: let to-morrow take care of itself; there may be evil in it, but let it alone till to-morrow comes. The point of his advice is, that the evil which is incidental to life is to be left distributed over life, and not be drawn forward, and added to the evil of to-day. If you do this, you overburden yourself; each day's evil is enough for it; you manage to get along with it in some way; you overcome it or bear it; it does not make you miserable nor disturb the true course of your life; but if you add to-morrow's evil to that of to-day, you will have a heavier burden than you can well bear, and will be thrown off the true line of existence. Christ does not deny nor lessen the reality of evil, — sorrow, perplexity, pain, toil, disappointment, — but he requires us to take it as it comes, and by no means to anticipate it. For we cannot prevent it, it will surely come; and if we anticipate it, we have it twice over.

Such is the line of thought here, and a most soothing picture of life it presents. It takes us out of this world of strife and anxiety and foreboding, and sets us down in the calm, unstriving world of nature with the birds and the flowers, and with as little need of anxiety; for are we not, along with them, under the tender care of the Father? A soothing picture, indeed, if we could but see and realize it! But as we attempt to do so, we are confronted by questions that are not easily answered, and we are led up to a conception of life seemingly

at variance with its best qualities. Am I to live here like a bird of the air, that neither sows nor reaps nor garners? Is it not rather my business to sow and reap and gather in? Am I not put under the law of intelligent, careful, thought-taking labor, and by no means under the improvident law of the brutes? Is not man and his method of living in the world the contrast to the birds and their instincts? And is a man like a lily, "whose red and white nature's own sweet and cunning hand lays on"? If a man would be arrayed like Solomon, must he not toil and spin? These are fair questions, but they admit of answer.

Christ does, indeed, intend to put us, in a general way, into the category of nature, but it is in a nature framed and sustained by an all-wise Father. We are in nature, but we are also above nature. So far as we are in it, the same care that is over birds and flowers is over us. Our bodies grow to their fullness of stature and divine proportions; the earth feeds them; the light and the rain bless them. The fixed laws of nature minister to our physical life with tender and constant care. But we are also above nature. Nature is fixed; man is free. The animals live by instinct, man lives by thought and choice and care; they are under natural laws, he is under moral laws.

Now, Christ's thought, as I imagine it, is this: as the birds and the flowers, in a sort of necessary way, keep the laws of their nature under the kindly care of the Father, all their wants are met; they sing and feed, they bloom and live out their brief lives

in glad perfection. But the secret of it lies in their unconscious obedience to the laws of their being; it is in obedience that the watchful care of God is realized. Hence, when Christ comes to apply the matter to men, he introduces the condition: Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and food and drink and raiment will follow. He by no means says, Live as careless of the future as a bird, but rather, Be as true to your law of righteousness as a bird is to the law of its condition, and you may be as free from anxiety. The point of the comparison lies in the certainty that the fowls of the air will find their wants met in the sure order of nature, because God is over and in it. But Christ says there is the same certainty in the free, moral world. God is over and in that also, and if a man will live in that world as faithfully as do the birds in theirs, he will as surely be fed, and need feel as little anxiety.

But we meet with other difficulties. There seems to be in these words an easy-going strain at variance with those qualities of forethought and aim and achievement on which the worth and strength of life turn. Who becomes wise, or strong, or even good without earnest, nay, anxious and care-taking strife? There is no gain or achievement in life except as a man looks forward, scans the future with stern inquiry and forecast, troubles himself with close scrutiny, scourges himself with stout resolve, braces himself to meet the possible storm, and gathers the whole future, with all its uncertainty and mischance, into his vision. Christ here seems

to conflict with his own teachings. Many of his parables turn on forethought of the most strict and resolute character. The foolish virgins were shut out simply because they were careless of the future. The unjust steward wins praise because of his forethought. Christ here seems to shut us up to the present, — Think only of to-day; but elsewhere and for the most part he stands with uplifted, warning finger pointing to the future, and says, Strive, agonize to enter in. There is no doubt that life, as Christ taught it, is a process moving on towards a realization in the future; it is an achievement not won to-day, but only in the end. We are servants awaiting in this night of existence our Lord's return. The account of human life is not rendered day by day, but when he cometh to reckon. Neither the coldest scrutiny nor the most easy-going estimate of life will say that it gets its reward as it goes on; it works toward an end and a consummation; its joy is set before it. The wise, Christ-taught man is he who keeps the end before him, and has the strength and patience to wait, and struggle, and press towards it. Why then have we these words that seem to soothe us out of this earnest, forward-looking, strenuous attitude, and to send us off to the simple, carefree world of birds and flowers, where indeed a good part of worthless humanity are content to dwell, — the paradise of fools? Is it not the very thing that Christ did not teach? But the seeming violence of the contradiction is the pledge of harmony. Christ does not here hold us back from forethought and care and even a sort of anxiety.

In the phrase, "Seek first the kingdom of God and its righteousness," he puts us into this very attitude. Seek, he says, first and always; and no seeking, no search, worthy of the name, can be made without care. The matter turns, then, on the thing that is to engage our thought and care. Not meat and drink and raiment, not the things the Gentiles seek after; let your search be after righteousness. Food and raiment will follow in the sure order of a wise and tender Providence, when you fill out the higher plan of your life. Put your solicitude, your careful thought, your strife, where it belongs, — in the realm of righteous obedience, — and there will be no occasion for anxiety elsewhere. Thus we see that Christ, when interpreted by himself, guards his thought against misinterpretation.

But he was aiming more specially to secure a certain temper or condition of mind in respect to every-day life. The quality, the temper, the atmosphere of life, was something with which Christ greatly concerned himself. For life is a fine and delicate thing, and requires favorable conditions. He strove to get it out from its needless hindrances and away from its useless burdens, and into a free and wholesome air. As he went about amongst men, he saw that they were burdened with a foolish anxiety as to the future, chiefly in regard to their physical wants. For the most part they had but one question, What shall we eat and drink and wear? The question ran off into the future, and brought back dark foreboding and mistrust; and so all the energy and thought of life were absorbed in

these lower matters, leaving no room or strength for higher things. To clear the atmosphere of daily life, — this is what Christ is aiming at.

Like everything else in this great discourse, it is a universal matter, it belongs to humanity. Anxiety for the future, fear of want, undue care for physical needs, — this is the common condition, this is what the Gentiles think about, but it is not to be so in the kingdom of God.

Let us now carry the subject into our own daily lives.

We are all of us more or less possessed by this anxiety. The greater part of our efforts turn upon providing for our future necessities, upon warding off the evils of poverty and dependence. So far we are quite right, for we are planted in the soil of this world; we must first eat and drink and be clothed, and we must do this in the way of anticipation and forethought. No man has a right, if he can properly avoid it, to face old age in poverty. A man cannot live as to his body from day to day; he is constructed on the plan of prevision; his natural life covers periods of non-production. No man ought to earn his bread in old age; he must earn it beforehand. It is the vice and the degradation of multitudes that they do not. But when it comes to anxiety and fret as to the future, it is another matter. And yet what is so natural, so inevitable — perhaps you say. We hardly deem it a fault; nay, to be caretaking and solicitous comes nigh being regarded as a virtue. Indeed Christ treats it more as a fault than as a vice, — tenderly rather than strenuously, — but no less as something to be overcome.

This spirit or habit of anxiety and worry over the future is something that we all condemn in ourselves, yet all share in. Now this is very strange, — human nature on both sides of a question, — two verdicts in one case, and both springing spontaneously from our minds! It sets forth the contradiction in man, and the mystery of his relation to the world: yet only one verdict can be true; to set aside the other is a good part of our business in the court of life. But there must be some powerful reason why we so generally pronounce the false verdict.

Why is man naturally anxious about the future? Because, while a weak and finite being, he is opened to time. He knows to-morrow; he sees the years before him; he knows that he has wants and that these wants recur; he knows that only care and thought and labor will meet these wants; he knows that he is weak, — that it is hard to wrest a living out of the world for to-day, while he has health and strength and opportunity; he sees himself growing weaker with age; he sees tender, dependent children about him; he sees the uncertainty of the future, — its wants sure, but its means of supplying them not sure, but subject to a thousand adverse chances.

There is thus a sort of antagonism bred in him, — time set before him, and himself a creature of to-day. He sees the future, but he cannot compass it; it holds before him its wants and demands, but he is conscious of no force in himself adequate to meet them. I have hard work to get my bread to-day; why, in all reason, should I not be anxious about to-morrow?

So we all think, and the thought seems justified by our relation to the world.

But if we will examine the thought, we shall see that it is made up of hard, cold calculation, — mathematical, even. Now, human life is not based on mathematics. It is a very useful thing in building bridges and selling goods, and no man should attempt to live in this world without a strict habit of account-keeping, if for no other end than a sure payment of debts on either side of the ledger. But human life rests also on other sciences, and on principles that are not usually named as science, but which are the essence and end of all science.

It is to these other principles that Christ directs us, and the main one is that of trust. The one central thought in his mind here is trust in God. But it is not a blind trust nor an irrational one, nor does it dispense with forethought and labor. On the contrary, Christ takes pains to give us the reasons for it, — tells us why and how we may trust. These reasons are as solid as the world, as sure as the process of nature, as true as God himself.

Let us now attend to them.

We are put into the sure order of nature, and this order is one of supply of wants.

Christ sends us to this world in his allusion to birds and flowers. Notice that he sends us to the harmless and beautiful and specially dependent objects of nature, and not to the ravening and repulsive side of it, — as if he would connect our lives with what is fine and gentle and trustful; and what sound in nature is so clear in its content as the note of a

bird? — what bravery is so modest and assuring as that of a flower lifting up itself under the mighty heavens and facing all the fierce powers of the world? It is often said that man "earns a living." It is true, but in a larger sense his living is provided for him, and his labor is merely supplementary, — to get it into shape and at hand. God named the world a garden, where he has put us with fruits and grains having their unfailing seeds of growth, and animals over which we have the mastery. Man has little to do but to take and eat. As he awakes in the world he finds all growing things needing only a little labor — that he himself also needs — to be turned into food. Water gushes from the spring; textures half-woven await his touch to be changed into raiment. A little transformation of the forest gives him shelter. Air and fire and water wait on him as humble ministers. The world is not only our dwelling-place, but it goes a long way towards providing a living, and making it reasonably certain. Here is where the blessedness of unvarying law comes in. We often look at these unyielding, immutable laws, and they seem hard and bitter because they do not shift to meet our shifting wants, but let us starve and shiver and bleed and die. But their unchangeableness is their grand excellence. Thus only we learn to use them, and thus we have a basis of trust which becomes a reproof of anxiety. Their certainty is the complement of our uncertainty and weakness. If they changed as we change, what horrible uncertainty would follow! Then, indeed, we might be anxious for the future. But if seed-time and harvest

do not fail, I shall not go hungry. If the sun rises to-morrow, I shall be lighted to my labor. If cattle and sheep feed on the hills or in barns, I shall be clothed and fed.

Now, this sure order of nature is a call to trust. It is God's way of assuring me that my physical wants will be met. To doubt this and fall into anxiety, is to doubt that this sure order of nature will go on; it is to presume that God will not be as good next year as he is this; that some part of the system by which we are clothed and fed will give out.

But perhaps you say: My anxiety does not reach so far as that, but only lest I may fail in my relation to it: there may be harvests, yet I may lack bread. But this only carries your anxiety and distrust of God into your relation to the world. Does not God put us here as he does the birds? The fowls of the air must seek their food according to the laws of their being, and so must you according to the laws of your being; and so you will be as surely fed, — nay more surely, for the laws of your being are surer than the instincts of birds. Moral laws have more certainty than physical laws. Or, in other words, God loves men more than he loves brutes, and has put them into surer methods. For a brute is subject to nature, but man can surmount and outwit nature. There are two simple facts that are enough to shut out all this low distrust and wearing anxiety: the unchanging goodness of God, and the sure order of nature, — one being simply the expression of the other.

We are put under a law of righteousness, and this law also works towards a supply of wants. Christ says, Seek first the kingdom of God and its righteousness. Why does he say *first?* Not merely because it is more important. It is indeed so; but Christ by no means teaches the shallow and irrational lesson that if you give yourself to your higher duties, God will reward you by supplying your lower wants. This would be commercial, and not divine. There is no miracle, no break in the chain of cause and effect in his care for his children. One who thinks so may come to poverty and hunger on the knees of unceasing prayer. The full truth is, that one who seeks first and mainly the righteousness of God's kingdom will not come to want, because the habits and laws of righteousness will prevent it. For what is righteousness? It is right-feeling and right-doing. A man who feels and thinks right, and does right, in these very ways provides for his future; they conduce to supply.

Put it now in the most practical light. A righteous man is without vices, and vice is the chief breeder of poverty and want; it is lawless passion that wastes resources, and unfits men to produce, and to earn a living. A righteous man is industrious, he is not righteous unless he is; and industry is the sure pledge of future supply. A righteous man is intelligent up to the opportunity and capacity of his nature, and intelligence makes one master of the future. A righteous man is careful, thrifty, and judicious; the whole habit of the spiritual life leads to these qualities. It forbids waste, it teaches fore-

thought, it trains the judgment, it forbids indolence, and demands energy in whatever the hand finds to do; it makes men thoughtful, prudent, and sober; and these all are paths of prosperity. By teaching humility and simplicity, it leads away from luxurious and needless expenditure; for, next to passion, there is no waster like pride. By inducing a life of thought, it shuts off those clamors of the lower nature that call for expensive indulgence. By teaching contentment, it defends one against the consuming appeals of ambition and display and new sensations. By its law of stewardship, it forbids one to waste and squander, and makes expenditure a matter of conscience. By fostering dignity and self-respect and manhood, it teaches one to hate dependence, to earn one's own living, and so the productive energies are brought out and set to work. It steadies a man, clears his judgment, and secures that even and balanced action of his nature which is the basis of prosperity; for not talent alone, not smartness nor luck, make a safe and rich future, but a sound and harmonious mind and a good conscience. Every law of Christ contemplates universal obedience; when all obey, all will be full. The fruits of righteousness are more than enough for her children.

Thus a righteous man, by the habit and law of his being, sows seed for the bread of to-morrow. He becomes rich in himself, is himself resources, capital, and a productive agent in all spheres. He comes into his promised supremacy over the world, nature and all beasts. This is the secret of the dominion granted him at the beginning, which was not given

to him as intelligent but as moral. It is the unfallen Adam who has dominion over all things, and they who rise out of this fall, and come into the righteousness of Christ, thus get command of food and raiment and shelter, and all else needful; thus they pass the flaming swords of the cherubim, reenter the garden, and resume the dominion lost through sin.

But righteousness gives us even surer grounds of trust than these.

It puts a man into such relations to his fellow-men that it builds for him houses of habitation for all his mortal years. For righteousness inspires love and sympathy. A good man is never without friends. The inmost principle of righteousness is oneness — the oneness of love, — and thus it starts into action all those forces of sympathy, pity, and helpfulness that make men so ready to aid one another, to make common cause, to cast in their goods in common if needful, to bear one another's burdens. There is no brotherhood on earth, however bound together by oaths, so strong as that of good men. "Will you help this poor man?" "I cannot tell — perhaps he is unworthy." "But he is a *good* man." "Ah, then I cannot refuse."

One sometimes sees a narrowly good man — one who has misconceived the nature of goodness, "one whom a little grain of conscience has made sour," good in a certain way, but ungenerous, unsympathetic — come to want, but never one who has caught the large, noble, and tender spirit of Christ. Such a man builds himself into the hearts of all men; he

creates debts of gratitude in others; he lays up treasure in the bosoms of multitudes that may be surely drawn on. I do not refer to gifts of charity, so called, — a righteous man seldom needs these, — but to that friendly spirit and support that almost every man requires at times. Alas! for the man who has no friends in the hard crises of his life! But a good man, a truly righteous man, is never without them. The future is uncertain, and chance and change play many tricks with us, but there is no provision against them comparable with that spiritual yet human love begotten by like love. It is better than bank, or bond, or land, for these are subject to the chance and mischance of a changing world; but the trust of man in man, the love of heart for heart, the oneness of spiritual sympathy — these never fail. When one lives in these righteous ways, he makes a friend of all humanity, and its helping hand is like the hand of God himself.

Be righteously true to your fellow-men, and you need have no anxiety for the future. "I have been young and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread;" — says the Psalmist. Why? Because "he is ever merciful, and lendeth."

And thus Christ saves us from anxiety and foreboding by simply putting us into the eternal order of righteousness. It takes us up, as it were, in arms, and bears us safely through life, — every real want met, every calamity averted or broken in its power to hurt. That one should not be fed and clothed who has come into this order, would be like going

to a feast and finding no food, or into a forest and finding no shade; the one carries the other.

"Trust," says Christ, "be not anxious." Yes; but trust according to the plan. There is no true trust but in righteousness and its eternal laws, yet such trust may be entire.

One final question comes up in regard to the subject. Why does Christ, in this inaugural discourse, devote so much time to such a matter as anxiety, — a thing that hardly comes within the range of morals? We do not call it a sin, nor did he. It never awakens in us pangs of conscience: it is but a misfortune if we are given to it; a simple fault if we indulge in it. Surely there is hardly any imperfection of our frail humanity that we regard so leniently. But Christ, nevertheless, treated it as a matter of great importance; and the reason is evident. First, — it is a source of great unhappiness. It was a main purpose with Christ to lessen the heavy burden of misery that presses on the human heart; it is crushed, not only under its sin, but under its sorrow. And so he told men how to cast it off, and to trust in God. He showed them that the two kingdoms of nature and righteousness are pledged to take care of them; that these two everlasting arms of God are under them!

Who does not thank him for the assurance! If we could but get rid of this foolish anxiety; if we could but stop saying, What shall we eat, and what shall we drink, and wherewithal shall we be clothed in this dread future before us, I think a good part of our unhappiness would have an end.

But Christ had a more imperative reason, — namely, to create an atmosphere of peace about the soul. Character requires a still air. There may be storm and upheaval around, but there must be peace within for the soul to thrive. But anxiety is the reverse of peace. It teases the mind with questions that it cannot answer; it broods over possible evil; it peoples the future with dark shapes; it frets the sensibilities with worrying conjecture. It spoils the present by loading it with the evil of to-morrow. Its tendency is, by dwelling on evil, to make us cowardly and selfish. Character cannot grow in such an atmosphere. Hence, as a matter of fact, we seldom find any great height and sweetness of character in an anxious-minded person, for the simple reason that it has no chance to grow; all the forces go in other directions. But when one, in wise and righteous ways, has learned to trust in God, and so has come into peace, then the seeds of all grace and beauty spring up, and spread out their leaves in the calm, warm air, and blossom out into full beauty — fed from beneath and above.

It was to secure an atmosphere for an end so eternally important as this, that Christ spoke these words.

Oh, how wise the teaching! How blessed to be able to receive it!

THE TWOFOLD FORCE IN SALVATION.

"God and man are so near together, so belong to one another, that not a man by himself, but a man and God, is the true unit of being and power. The human will in such sympathetic submission to the divine will, that the divine will may flow into it and fill it, and yet never destroy its individuality; my thoughts filled with the thought of One who, I know, is different from me while he is unspeakably close to me; — are not these the consciousnesses of which all souls that have been truly religious have been aware?" — Rev. Phillips Brooks, D. D., *Baccalaureate Sermon at Harvard College*, 1884.

"O power to do! O baffled will!
O prayer and action! ye are one."

J. G. Whittier.

"Any one who could see quite through himself would seem to have come to an end of himself; he alone who is gradually discovering himself is entitled to take an interest in his own existence." — Lotze, *Microcosmus*, p. 12.

"One half from earth, one half from heaven,
Was that mysterious blessing given,
Just as his life had been
One half in heaven, one half on earth,
Of earthly toil and heavenly mirth
A wondrous woven scene."

F. W. Faber, *St. Philip's Death.*

"Just as it is the distinction of a crystal, that it is transparent, able to let the light into and through its close flinty body, and be irradiated by it in the whole mass of its substance, without being at all more or less distinctly a crystal, so it is the grand distinction of humanity, that it is made permeable by the divine nature, prepared in that manner to receive and entemple the Infinite Spirit; to be energized by him and filled with his glory in every faculty, feeling, and power." — Horace Bushnell, *Sermons for the New Life*, p. 31.

THE TWOFOLD FORCE IN SALVATION.

Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to work, for his good pleasure. — PHILIPPIANS ii. 12, 13.

THIS sentence falls from the lips of St. Paul as easy and natural as his breath. It has no particular emphasis, no special importance. It is not a climax either of thought or feeling; it is not a definition; it shows no trace of a long or careful process of thought of which it is the conclusion. It has not the force of a score of other passages, and evidently was not framed to express a fundamental truth, far less to determine a controverted point. It is a casual remark, dropped almost incidentally; true, but not combating any specific error; important, but not specially important. As it came from St. Paul it was a simple, natural, almost commonplace exhortation to earnestness, with the encouragement that God would coöperate; as any one of us might say to another: "Work with all your might and God will help you." But what St. Paul said in this casual way has been caught up by opposing schools of thought, turned to a use he never dreamed of, crowded with meaning that he did not intend, made

the rallying cry of theological champions, and a very body of divinity. It is an illustration of how Scripture is often misused by having meanings read into it. In St. Paul's day, the controversy as to faith and works had not arisen, at least in its modern form. St. Paul did indeed assert that the works of the Jewish ritual are of no value, and that faith is the vital principle of character, — not what a man does, but what he believes is the main thing, for belief carries action and covers the whole nature; but of the modern question between Arminian and Calvinist he had not the slightest conception. But Arminian and Calvinist seized this phrase, cut it in two, emphasized each his own word in it according to his philosophy, and, thus equipped, fought each other for two hundred years or more over a doctrine of faith and works. But the controversy is practically at an end; the victory is with neither, or rather with both; so that we can go back to these words of gracious encouragement, and read them in the same simple, natural way in which they were first written.

Now, what does St. Paul say? Simply this: Strive for your salvation; work it out yourself; do not rely on others; it is your own matter, and a very serious one, hence be earnest about it; do not trifle nor take it for granted that you will be saved; if you ever see salvation you must work for it with fear and trembling, or you may fail of it. But at the same time remember, for your encouragement, that while you work, God also works in you; he wills in your will, he acts in your act. If you are earnest in

this matter and have an honest heart about it, you may rely on the fact that God is at work in you, the soul and energy of the whole process.

Such and so simple is the thought. But simple as it is, it teaches several important lessons.

I. That salvation is an achievement. First let us see what is here meant by salvation. It does not mean anything done by Christ in the way of expiation or removing hindrances. If such things enter into salvation, they are not the things that a man himself is to work out. Nor does it mean getting to heaven. A man does not enter heaven in order to find salvation, but because he has already been saved. Heaven is the result; salvation is the process. Nor is it an immediate work, wrought in some hour of deep feeling or full surrender. What is done at such a time may be a very important part of salvation, but it is not so much of it that one can say after such an experience: "I have found salvation." It may be a great mistake to say this, for it may lead one to confound the first step with the whole journey, and to sit down satisfied with what has already been done. Evidently it was not such an experience that St. Paul had in mind when he said: "Work out your salvation;" but rather a moral process in which time and effort are chief factors; a moral process, I say. If a man has any sinful habits, he must overcome them; if he has any lacks or weaknesses, he must work to supply the deficiency. And then there is the great reality of character — a welded group of qualities that only comes about by elaboration. The qualities may

have a natural root or ground, but each one must be worked out; it must come under the conscience and the will; it must be tried and shaped and fed and worked into the substance of the character. When all good qualities are so wrought out and united in a man, he may be said to have achieved a character; and, so far as he is concerned, to have worked out his salvation.

II. Another thing taught here is, that this achievement of salvation is at the cost of sharp and definite strife.

There is something to be done in the world by every man born into it, that can only be wrought in this way, namely: a certain change or achievement in character gained by the man's own effort. It is a process and an undertaking that must be deliberately chosen and steadfastly pursued year after year. Of other forces that enter in and help, I shall speak farther on; but first of all it must be understood that every man is bound, by every consideration of duty and self-regard, by every law of his nature, by the sense of his destiny, by the sense of his condition and of the meaning of life, to undertake a certain work called *salvation*. We are here in the world to do this very thing, and to do little else. I am well aware that what is called the work of life is a complex thing, and may be stated in many ways. The first duty assigned to man was to people and subdue the earth; the next, to drive out savagery and build up civilization. Another work is to perfect society, to overcome tyranny, and establish just and merciful institutions; another is to dispel

ignorance and create intelligence; another is to get rid of whatever is vicious and low and brutal and coarse, and bring in whatever is pure and high and noble and fine. But if you look closely at these works, you will see that they are all works of deliverance and rescue, — evil overcome and good achieved. They are not simply natural processes, like the growth of a tree, or an animal that passes from one stage of perfection to another; they are not developments from lower to higher as in the natural world, but changes in which evil is cast out by struggle and suffering. There is no evil to be got rid of in a sapling or a young lion. In the world of nature the steps are from less to more, from good to better, from lower to higher, and each is beautiful and good in its time and degree. But it is not so with man, nor is his growth such as this. When he comes upon the stage he finds evil, and his work is to cast it out and bring in good. He cannot stand still and look at humanity as he looks at a tree, and say: "See how it grows; see how it develops its inborn forces." Instead, he finds evils and wrongs that are one with humanity, and yet are no proper part of it. He sees barbarism; that must be overcome. He sees tyranny and cruelty and vice; these must be fought down. He sees ignorance; that must be dispelled. He sees injustice, greed, pride, selfishness; these must be eradicated. None of these things go out of themselves; they are not outgrown nor sloughed by natural process, nor left behind in a passive development of society, but always and everywhere men have felt themselves called to

fight against them. Evil is overcome by struggle, by sharp, distinct, positive effort, and by effort involving suffering and sacrifice. No nation and no man ever yet grew into virtue, or dropt evil as a tree sheds its dead leaves.

My point is this: all these various works that are commonly assigned to man are works of deliverance or salvation; they resolve themselves at last to that complexion and properly take on such designation. You can have no better or truer name for this great world-work of man than *salvation*. Society in all its struggle and upheaval is first of all saving itself, working out of and away from its evils. Look at the world and its history. What is it but a history of struggle with evil? What else has the world been trying to do but to save itself from its evils? Look at society. What is its main effort and struggle but to check and to put away its evils? What is the main function of government, institutions, education, but conflict with evil? Turn it about, and say that the end of society is to develop and harmonize humanity, that the evil is incidental and will fall away as man moves towards his perfect humanity. State it thus if you prefer, but tell me if every step is not attended by a conflict with evil, with bad conditions, and if this is not by far the greater part of the work in hand. Tell me if a single gain has been made that did not turn upon an overthrow of some positive evil which was the main factor in the operation. Call the progress of society development if you prefer, but you do not name it by its largest feature. Salvation is better, because truer and more

philosophical; it recognizes the main factor, the process, and the beneficent result; it is a better use of language. It is well to name things properly, and they are properly named when they are truly described. Thus the Protestant Reformation is rightly designated because it recognizes the evil condition, the process of recovery, and the end accomplished. So salvation, as a name for the general work of humanity, is a proper term, because it recognizes the evils of society, the rescue from them, and the good result. It is not only philosophically true, but it has a warm and joyful note; it has a human interest; the heart throbs with it and the mind leaps into exulting ecstasy with it: —

> "Salvation, oh, salvation!
> The joyful sound proclaim."

Let us not be ashamed of the old Scriptural names and terms that describe the march of humanity. Keep the cant out of them, but hold on to the reality they describe. It will be a sorry day for the world when this great process through which it is moving is called by any other name than salvation. Christ and his church struck to the root of the matter and penetrated to the utmost secret of the world in the use of this word.

As salvation is the great world-business, the main thing that humanity has to do, so is it the main thing every man has to do. Hence the first and constantly recurring question every man should ask himself is, Am I saving myself? I am ignorant; am I saving myself from that state? I find in myself hereditary evil, — faults, defects, proclivities of one

sort and another; am I saving myself from these? I have contracted evil habits and appetites; am I casting them out? I have mean dispositions, — to indolence, to moral cowardice, to self-complacence, to petty rivalry, to contempt of others, to censoriousness, to evil-speaking, to petulance or anger, to hardness and revenge, to easy toleration of existing evils, to a low standard of conduct; am I seeking to be saved from these? I am absorbed in business, and in danger of forgetting that I have fellow-men about me to be helped and benefited; am I saving myself from that tendency? I am fast becoming a slave to avarice; am I saving myself from that hell? I am getting involved in the whirl of fashion and display and vain pleasure, — a being to be merely diverted; am I saving myself from that still deeper pit of perdition? I am passing on from day to day without moral earnestness, without communion with God, doing nothing for humanity, for the community, for my neighbors, for the little children in the street, for the ignorant and suffering about me, nothing high and good for myself or for others; am I striving to escape from this broad road to destruction?

Some may say that it is better to take the positive view, and to strike straight for good conduct and the virtues, without looking off upon this negative side of escape and deliverance. But the negative and positive, evil and good, are so mingled in this world that we cannot shut our eyes to one and look only for the other. Evil is a reality; a fault or a vice or a defect is a positive as well as a negative thing, a fact as well as a lack, and facts must always be recog-

nized. If one has a mean, miserly strain in him, or a lustful taint, or a dull, earthy spirit, it is as real as the corresponding virtue, and one must first know it as such before one can reach the virtue. The sailor must not only keep his ship headed for the port and bend his sails to catch every helpful wind, but even before he does this and as more important, he must know what shoals lie in his course, what headlands intercept it, what currents tend to sweep him out of his reckoning, and what weaknesses there may be in his ship. The sailor must save his vessel from its dangers before it can make its voyage. And so there enters into every man's life first a work of salvation. Save yourself from your evil; cast out, cut off, drive away, the evil that has got into your heart and life, and rooted itself in your habits and dispositions. This is the first half of salvation; then you are ready to be saved. For the elimination of evil is not salvation. The house swept clean is not a home. A man with no faults or vices is not faultless nor virtuous. When the house of his heart is swept clean and the faulty or vicious disposition is brought under control, then there opens before him the great positive work of salvation; then he may begin to build himself up into the proportions of true spiritual manhood.

III. I come now to speak of this process as it is described in the text: "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to work, for his good pleasure," — a twofold process, you perceive. But one process seems almost to antagonize the other.

St. Paul says, Work it out yourself; do not rely on something or somebody else; it is your own affair. The words breathe a spirit of absolute independence; they imply the possibility and even necessity that a man should save himself; but in the same breath he introduces a helper and complicates the process, and even seems to take the heart and meaning out of it, — your own salvation; work it out for yourself; then it will be your own indeed. This is plain enough. But he does not leave it so; another is brought in who does it all: God works in you to will and to work. Here is confusion and contradiction enough. The wind of inspiration blows east and west at the same time. Let us rise into higher regions and see if we cannot strike a current that sets in one direction.

We find here one of the plainest illustrations of a doctrine that is now coming into fuller recognition than it has had since its first Hebraic and Christian utterance, namely, the doctrine of the Divine Immanence, or the actual presence and residence of God in all things and beings, the life of all lives, the force in all forces, the soul of all being. The Hebrew nation was steeped in this truth; it made it an inspired nation. Christ planted himself upon it, and gave to it its highest and most spiritual expression. St. John echoes Christ's own words. St. Paul put it into a sharp and eternal definition, "In him we live and move and have our being." It is the separation of this truth from an external, mechanical conception of God, and the recovery of it to its original force and meaning, that underlies the quickened religious thought of the age, and that is

serving it so well in its conflict with naturalism. Without this doctrine, the church of to-day would be swept into the gulf of atheism. God in and under and behind all things and all beings, — this is eternal rock and sure foothold. The world does not exist by itself; it exists in God. Man does not live, machine-like, by himself; he lives and moves and has and holds his being in God. His energy and force are not his own, but flow out of God. He has indeed a free will, but God is the source of it; but because it is a free will God can only act with it and by its consent. He is not, however, excluded from this realm of our nature. God may enter the will and fill it with power and work with it, without impairing its nature or injuring the value of its action.

This seems to be St. Paul's thought here. Use your will, work out your salvation with fear and trembling, — that is, in humble, dead earnestness; when you so work, God is working with you. By virtue of your honesty and earnestness and humility, God is present, mingling so closely with your efforts that you cannot tell how much is yours and how much his. It is all his; it is all yours; it is each; it is both; it is neither alone; together they are one.

No other influence can touch a man like God's. When I give you my hand, it is in part my strength that upholds you. When you cheer or inspire me, I am leaning on your inspiration. But when God works in a man to will and to work, the union of wills is so close, that separate threads of influence cannot be detected. The one indivisible current is

flowing in one tide through the man's heart, and thus all the benefit of the action is reaped by the man. There is no longer any conflict between working out your own salvation and God working in you. It often hurts a man to be helped by others; it surely hurts him to be helped much, but it never hurts a man to be helped by God. The energy that he imparts does not subtract from a man's own, nor beget a sense of undue dependence, nor induce a relaxation of the sinews of his will, nor lessen the value of its action.

Consider now how important it is that we should recognize this twofold process in salvation. St. Paul never forgot it, and no wise man ever does. No such man omits God either in the struggle of life, or in the process of salvation, or in the building of character. Now suppose God were left out in this process and man saved himself. Suppose, if it were possible, that a man alone and without help, without God, could overcome all his weaknesses and faults and evil habits, could purify his heart so that he should not lust after evil, could so train and harden his will that he could resist all temptation, could so chasten his mind that he would love only what is true and high. Suppose he could so train and develop himself that his faculties should work harmoniously, — mind clear and strong, desires high, judgment firm, tastes pure, social and domestic instincts duly heeded, and so come to be a wise, strong, good man, but without any conscious help from God, the whole wrought by himself, — what sort of a man would you have? Assuredly a con-

ceited man, who at last will become a selfish one. His achievement is his own; why should he not be proud? And, as his whole struggle has been in and about himself, he inevitably grows into a fixed state of self-consciousness. His thought is not for another, but for himself, and, by the very law of his being, he gravitates towards selfishness. An illustration is seen in Goethe, — the most thoroughly trained and self-developed man of his century, but one whose sense of God as entering into the process was but faint, and whose character is not redeemable from the charge of selfishness. Such men are not rare, and they are growing frequent under modern theories of culture, but they are not lovely; they do not win, nor move, nor do the best things. They break an eternal law, and suffer a corresponding defeat. A man cannot isolate himself in sharp individuality from man and God, and live. If he shuts himself off from man, he withers and shrinks into nothingness. If he separates himself from God, he fails in height and also in depth of character; he limits himself; he gets no higher than the earth, stays within the circle of the present world, and never outgrows it. And so there comes about that saddest of all sights, — a divine being working in the world of mere things, an immortal being shutting himself up in time, an enduring, feeling, thinking being slowly but surely leaving behind him all that he knows or cares for, and entering into years of age vacant of anything to feed his mind or supply his heart. No! It is a sad experiment that so many are making, — trying to live a worthy life

without God. If they succeed, the result is faulty, and in any case it is sad.

Suppose, again, that God alone saved a man, without effort of his own. Suppose that he shut up every path of evil so that there should be no play of will and choice. Suppose that by some divine alchemy the soul could be whitened of all stains of evil while man remained passive. Suppose legions of angels could descend in great crises of temptation and fight our battles for us. Suppose divine grace were so poured out that the spirit should be kept in a passive ecstasy before divine things. Suppose we were carried as children in arms through all the strife and labor of life, — what would be the result? Worse than in the previous case. It were better that a man should save himself alone than that he should do nothing and God do all. Neither is possible, but each is a way that is attempted. Many men try to get on without God, and many, in one way or another, are weakly trusting in God to save them. Is it not possible that some who are cherishing what they call a hope, who have professed religion, who joined the church, who think that once — years ago — they were converted and found salvation, are making this mistake, simply expecting that God will save them, but how or why is not quite clear?

Not to such a key does St. Paul sound this trumpet-blast of appeal. No man could believe more fully that God and God only saves us; but it is only as we work out our own salvation. It is salvation because it is worked out, — not awaited, not trusted for, not left to chance, not a matter of some

bright hour, not a thing of church, nor of divine decree, nor of divine mercy, nor of probable outcome in future worlds, but a process of action that by this very quality secures the end of salvation. For salvation is character; it is perfected manhood; it is evil cast out and good achieved; it is the will practiced in righteousness; it is the flight of the soul into heaven on the two pinions of love of man and love of God: stop their united beat for one moment and it drops away from the heaven of salvation.

Now suppose again that, by an inextricable process, God and man unite in the work of salvation, what is the result? I can only hint the unimpeachable answer. When a man recognizes that God is at the bottom of all his work, he is led straight up to the exercise of every grace and element of character. Then he becomes reverent, and reverence is one half of character, — the fear of God is the beginning and well-nigh the whole of wisdom. Along with it comes humility, — the soil of all the virtues, the atmosphere of all noble character. And, as the man comes more and more to feel that God is in him and with him, he is swept into the current of God's own thoughts and feelings, and so he loves as God loves; and all the patience, the tenderness, the pity, the truth, the justice, the majesty of God, brood over him and work in him, subduing him unto their own quality. Oh, it is a great thing for a man to let God in upon him! For in God he finds himself, and in God he is led up to every duty, and into paths of illimitable desire, and so on into oneness with God himself.

FAITH ESSENTIAL RIGHTEOUSNESS.

"Through faith man comes into the life of God, the life of love and righteousness. This is the true life of man. This is the foundation of the life of the family and the nation, and, though it may not seem justified in the physical process, without it —

> " 'The pillared firmament is rottenness,
> And earth's base built on stubble.' "
> ELISHA MULFORD, LL. D., *The Republic of God*, p. 179.

> "Believe and trust. Through stars and suns,
> Through life and death, through soul and sense,
> His wise, paternal purpose runs;
> The darkness of his providence
> Is star-lit with benign intents.
>
> "O joy supreme! I know the Voice,
> Like none beside on earth or sea;
> Yea, more, O soul of mine, rejoice:
> By all that he requires of me,
> I know what God himself must be."
> J. G. WHITTIER, *Revelation.*

" God grant us to be among those who wish to be really justified by faith, by being made just persons by faith, — who cannot satisfy either their conscience or their reason by fancying that God looks on them as right when they know themselves to be wrong; and who cannot help trusting that union with Christ must be something real and substantial, and not merely a metaphor and a flower of rhetoric." — CHARLES KINGSLEY.

" Philamon had gone forth to see the world, and he had seen it; and he had learnt that God's kingdom was not a kingdom of fanatics yelling for a doctrine, but of willing, loving, obedient hearts." — CHARLES KINGSLEY.

FAITH ESSENTIAL RIGHTEOUSNESS.

And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness. — GENESIS xv. 6.

THE story of Abraham is permeated with this twofold fact: he believed in God, and this faith was regarded as actual righteousness, because, in the large view, it answered the ends of righteousness.

When the relation of character to conduct is fully understood, it is seen that faith is righteousness; the flower of character grows from the root of belief. Conduct is the all-important environment of character, but is no essential part of it.

I take this great principle which St. Paul elaborated, and which became the key-note of the Protestant Reformation, — a principle that will be fully vindicated only in later and higher stages of human society, — and place it before us somewhat as a flag or pennant, while we make a general study of the man who first illustrated it.

In Abraham we have not only the beginnings of history, but of biography. He is the first man of whom we have any clear conception. Enoch "walked with God," and Noah "feared God," but these comprehensive words do not carry with them a

definite portraiture of individual character. But we have enough of Abraham's life to know something of his nature, — what sort of a man he was, how he felt and thought, and from what motives he acted. Still the picture is not wholly clear as we trace it along those ancient pages, so unlike in their parts, so various in their sources, so different in their tones, — now firm and distinct as if uttered by the genius of history itself, now flowing in idyllic strains, now shadowy with remote traditions, now wearing the form of a dream or vision recorded as fact, now suggesting a mythical use of natural events for moral ends. It is like a summer morning when the vapors envelop the landscape: here and there a headland stands out in the conquering sunlight; a glint of waters; the outline of a forest, faintly discerned, but without definite lines; the seen melting vaguely into the unseen, where the eye of sense yields to the eye of the imagination.

The narrative here and elsewhere in Genesis presents too many questions to be discussed at present. Rather than attempt it, it is better to avoid explanatory theories and trust to a trained and intelligent sense of language, under some such guiding principle as "the letter killeth, the spirit maketh alive." Literalism is fatal to any rational conception of the history of Abraham. To hold that Jehovah ate flesh in a tent, is to outdo heathen anthropomorphism. To impatiently reject the whole as a tissue of mythical traditions, is to cast away possible pearls; it is also scientific, for science is now getting to a point where it deals with the shadowy and the uncertain, and

often reverses their apparent character. To take what we find and extract its moral, without care as to its form, is the better if not the only way; and, if we lose anything through the shadowy and elusive character of the narrative, it is made up in its naturalness, its simplicity, and its evident honesty. The depicting strokes are few, but they are reliable. Not much is said of Abraham, but whatever is said is full of light.

The chief value of a study of the ancient Hebrew characters lies in the fact that they disclose truth through life rather than by speculation. They live out truth in an actual process. Their conduct is a direct response to motives; it is largely spontaneous, or, as we say, natural. The Hebrew is not a logician; he has no dialectic; and, when he attempts the use of logic, he soon abandons it, as in Job, and returns to the Hebrew method of practical experience and direct vision, or as in St. Paul, who often begins a logical process, but forgets it or uses it carelessly or inconsequently, and finally falls back on intuition and assertion. The Hebrew has no formal logic, but he is not therefore illogical. His life always has in it what may be called a human order, because it is spontaneous and is not warped and limited by speculation. The successive phases of his history are united by strict premise and conclusion, but the bond is his actual experience, not his speculations. Hence he illustrates truth well, shows how conduct and character are made up; his creed and his life, his philosophy and his religion, are one. Truth so revealed is clearer and more authoritative

than when reached by dialectic methods. Life and conduct tell but one story, but a process of reasoning always suggests the possibility of another process equally sound and with some other conclusion. It is not till we come to a dialectic age that we begin to find that strange and unnatural conflict between faith and reason — at once horrible and grotesque — which is seen in a church that persecutes, that forces belief, and turns a Gospel into a doom. A Hebrew might possibly have combined in his conduct inconsistencies equally great, but he would not have tried to justify himself by a process of reasoning. Compare a character like Balaam with such a one as Hildebrand or Torquemada, or David with Cromwell. David is plain and clear even in his contradictions, but who can trace the working of such a mind as Cromwell's? The theology of Isaiah is simple and consistent, as natural as life, because it is never far from life, but what relation to human life or to the Gospel has the theology of Calvin? Hence the Hebrew mind could easily be made the vehicle of a revelation; it accurately reflected impressions and was sensitive to them, and it interpreted them into words and acts without modification. The Hebrew acted as he felt, spoke as he saw, thought in a simple and direct way on his experiences; the thing that he clearly saw and deeply felt was to him the word of God. Hence the great value of a study of Hebrew characters. They are like fine art, — full of truth and revelation; they have in them the logic of human nature, and so far as they embody religion they express it truly.

It is an interesting fact that the first distinct character in human history sets forth the greatest of all truths, namely, that faith in God is essential righteousness. If it be a coincidence, it is a moving one, and one that suggests a Providence rather than chance. Treat it as we may, we can never cease to wonder at the fact that, as the mists of antiquity clear away and disclose the first historical man, we behold one who is magnificently illustrating the truth of all ages, that faith constitutes character; for so we may interpret the assertion that Abraham's belief in God was counted to him for righteousness. To the Jews of St. Paul's day, who had for generations been trained under a ceremonial law, it was not plain that righteousness turned on faith; but the thinker of to-day finds no difficulty in accepting it unless he puts fictitious meanings upon faith and righteousness. If faith be regarded as a vague and magical thing, and not as downright, thorough-going belief and confidence, and if righteousness be regarded as some vague and magical condition instead of right behavior, there is still room for perplexity. There is no better way of getting a clear conception of this truth than by studying it in this first example of it.

Abraham's faith was counted for righteousness because it worked chiefly in the field of natural relations, which is the main field of righteousness. His faith was not a mere state of mind, but an active principle at work in the every-day fields of life. He finds himself surrounded by idolatry, and so gets away from it, puts the river and the desert between

his household and the nature-worship of Chaldea. He finds a mysterious hope dwelling within him that he shall become the founder of a great nation, and so he seeks a country where this hope can be fulfilled. He finds himself a stranger amongst heathen, and he strenuously remains a stranger, keeps apart from them, asserts his superiority, preserves the peace, but will come under no obligation, pays for what he receives, and allows no intermarriage with them. Questions arise between Lot and himself as to pasturage; he treats the affair with lofty and tender generosity, and trusts in God to do as well in rocky Hebron as in the valley of Jordan. His kinsman is captured and he bravely rescues him, worshiping on the way and paying tithes to the mystical king of Salem, — a warrior and a worshiper at the same time. He illustrates both a tender humanity and a sense of the practical value of righteousness and of its saving power, by pleading for the preservation of Sodom, placing himself in this matter on the very highest plane of conduct. In his family relations he symbolizes the divine character, — the father of the gentle and obedient son of promise, and of the turbulent child of the bond-woman; but he yearns over each alike: "O that Ishmael might live before thee!" So God yearns over all his children, even those whom a jealousy calling itself social wisdom has driven into the desert of despair. But, like God, Abraham can await the unfolding of time, and so does the thing that needs to be done at present — sends Hagar into the wilderness, and suffers his fortunes to concentrate upon Isaac; for even so wisdom and love often seem to conflict.

Here are lofty qualities acting in wise, yet simple and natural ways; they may be summed up in fidelity to natural relations. Abraham's righteousness consisted in faith, but it was because this faith led him to practical justice, to strictest honor, to purest kindness and tenderest love, and because it upheld him in great undertakings, and in stern and solitary adherence to what he felt to be true. Here is no divorce of faith from works. By reason of his faith, he was in the midst of the best of works, but his righteousness is set down to his faith because it sprang out of faith. We must resolutely hold to this view, and reject that which presents Abraham as simply rewarded because he believes a difficult and improbable thing. The difficult and improbable may be the test of faith, but there can be no moral value in believing it. When Abraham — already an old man — believed that his seed should be as the stars of heaven, because God had so assured him, he showed the reality of his faith in God, but it was counted to him as righteousness because, being real, it yielded righteousness. Let us not stumble here. God does not reward and count you worthy because you believe some hard thing, or trust him in some dark hour; but because you do so trust him you show that you have a moral quality and force that ensure righteousness. Faith is counted for righteousness, because it reveals a real righteousness. But why is righteousness made to turn on faith in God if it consists in fulfilling worldly and human relations? Because in the final analysis all our main relations are to God. In him we live and move

and have our being. I have no real relation to this world; the relation is transient, phenomenal; I shall soon be out of this world, and am at no time wholly in it. Strictly speaking, I have no duties to the world by itself. The world did not make me, nor give me my powers; it has no claim upon me, and I owe it no allegiance. My real relation is to God; it may be *through* the world and human ties, but it is *to* God. Now, righteousness or character can be wrought out only in the fulfillment of a real relation, and if our only real relation is to God, there lies the field of character; nor can it be gained in any other way. This is the reason why we insist so strenuously on faith in God, and why we suspect all character and conduct, however fair, that are not consciously drawn from God. Men ask: Is it not enough if we act right and do good? The answer is: You will not act right and do good unless you believe in God. You may secure some external, transient results that seem good, but you are working in a fleeting and phantasmal world — not in the real and eternal world. There is no duty, no service, no reward, no righteousness, and no character except through faith in God.

Abraham's history reached its culmination in that experience wrongly named the sacrifice of Isaac, for Isaac was not sacrificed; rather should it be called the sacrifice of Abraham, since he was both the priest and the oblation. Of the narrative we will only stop to say that it matters little where the line of historical reality is drawn, though the greatness and accuracy of the truth it conveys would seem to

indicate that it sprang out of an actual experience and not from some dreaming brain. Truth is always realized before it is thought out, experienced before it is conceived. In the divine mind conception goes before action, but in man the order is reversed: he acts and then formulates the principle of his action. Such is the law of a conditioned being. God starts in the perfection of spiritual existence, and from that point goes forth into action, — the universe springing from preëxistent conception. But man starts from the opposite pole, — a spark of intelligence under the weight of the whole world, — and thence works his way up to God by the path of trial. He knows no truth until he has achieved it by experience. Hence we may justly infer that these truths of faith and sacrifice, as found in the story of Abraham, sprang out of an actual experience. Before Prometheus lived in the brain of Æschylus, some man had stolen fire from heaven and paid the penalty; and before he sang of Iphigenia, some father had offered his child to appease angry gods. The conception of Abraham's sacrifice could not have existed except through actual occurrence, and the absoluteness of the truth confirms its historical origin. Some doctrine of sacrifice might be conjured up in the brain of some dreamer; this has been done and much else of the sort in later ages; but such a sacrifice as that of Abraham has in it a fineness and exactness of truth that come only from the human heart as it struggles under the burden of duty; for men always act more truly than they speculate or imagine.

There is no better way of getting at the secret of this history than to regard it as an object-lesson in religion. God teaches in one way only, — by reality; man learns in but one way, — by experience. And so, as humanity emerges from its unlighted and brutish past and enters upon a clear and rational history, there is taught in the person of this man the great lesson of faith, — how it works, what it requires, what it secures. A most striking and significant fact! Trace history back to its first chapter and we find the same experience in religion that we are to-day striving to work out. Fix your eye upon the first historical man and you behold him enacting the law of sacrifice in its highest form, and exercising faith in the fullest degree, — eternal lessons by which alone nations and men live!

I will now speak of these lessons more in detail.

1. Full faith in God leads to Godlike action.

The essential feature of the experience is that Abraham is led to feel that he must give up to God in the way of sacrifice the source of all his joy and hope. His son was a child of laughter; in the begetting and the conceiving of him the power and joy of youth were renewed; all his vast hope as the founder of a nation turned on the life of his son. It was the intensity of his gratitude to God that led to the idea of sacrifice. When a man believes in God as Abraham believed, — absolutely, with his whole nature; and when he receives from God great gifts, and so comes under an overwhelming sense of gratitude and obligation, — he feels moved and bound to give back to God these very gifts. Just because

they came as gifts, unexpectedly and out of due course and so sweeter, and because also they are in themselves rich and dear, he is impelled to give them back to God. Abraham in this matter acted in accordance with the law of a fine and true nature; for it is not according to human nature to stolidly accept gifts without sign or return. Human nature, when at its highest and noblest, rises towards an equality with God; it would match the fullness of divine love by giving back to God in loving sacrifice the gift of love. So we all feel in our better moods. Abraham was acting in no strange way; the logic of his conduct was the same as that which governs all noble hearts. What God gives in love, loves gives back to him: this is the moral play between God and man by which the joy of God becomes the joy of man; the moral equilibrium of the spiritual universe is so maintained. Abraham was but grandly and perfectly illustrating this principle. The method of carrying it out may have been mistaken, and so it was hindered in its execution, but the mistake does not impugn the truth of the principle and feeling under which he was acting. He has come in some way to a sense of the first and greatest of religious truths, — the sum of all religious truths, — faith in God; but he has found no corresponding means of expressing it. His heart has outrun his intellect. He belongs to all ages in his faith, but to his own age in the expression of it. His spiritual sense is not commensurate with his condition. He has found God, but he has not found a way in which to worship him. His faith has no medium, no ritual, no lan-

guage. Under such circumstances it is not strange that, driven by the vehemence of his faith towards expression of some sort, he should have fallen into ways that were common. The method or form did not much concern him. Some method and form he must have; let it be what it may, so his faith can use it. The form may belong to the heathen about him: what of it? Did he commit himself to their ideas by using their form? We can imagine him in mental stress over the subject, — his heart demanding the sacrifice of the object he held dear, but his mind shrinking from an idolatrous custom, — a debate settled by the superior weight of his believing heart, which gave no quarter to his hesitating mind. The very excess and vehemence of his faith swept him over and past all self-criticism, as well as self-love. "Let me be as a heathen outwardly, if so it need be: I must in some way give back to God what he has given to me." And so God suffers him to move along on this line, — a true line spiritually and in the main, a false line practically. His feeling and purpose are counted as righteous; his ritual is corrected and annulled. His mighty faith ushers in the eternal law of conduct; his false expression of it undergoes a divine illumination.

2. True sacrifice is to be of self, and of naught else.

Keep in mind the fact that Abraham is being taught and grounded in religion; that he is learning the lesson that righteousness is by faith; that he is learning it through the one and only method of sacrifice. He clearly apprehends the principle of sac-

rifice, but he blunders in the application of it. He falls into the common notion that the virtue of sacrifice consists in the offering of some victim through which there is loss or suffering ; he thinks he cannot express his obligation and gratitude except by some pain inflicted on himself or another, — the old mistake ! There is no gain in simple suffering, in giving up and parting with what is good and sweet and beautiful : righteousness does not come about in that way ; it comes instead through that faith and trust in God which makes one capable of any sacrifice. What God was aiming at was not to end the life of Isaac, but to win the heart of the father. If he can induce Abraham to believe in him when there is every apparent reason for doubting him, — believe in God as against the world and against his own heart, and even against the external promise of God, — he has secured a state of mind that will yield all righteousness ; for as a man believes so he acts. If God can get Abraham over upon his side and up into his own life and truth ; if Abraham will die unto himself and to the world and its vain customs, and come out of his sacrifice a believing man, — the main result is achieved. He will have learned that true sacrifice requires no victim, but only the will of the offerer.

Hence the history, which is not to be viewed except as a whole. God did tempt Abraham, and God did say, " Take thy son, thy only son whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah and offer him there for a burnt offering." Yes, but God did not say this apart from the whole transaction.

Do not carp or confuse yourself with small criticisms. It is a divine teaching, and God was in it and all about it. The conclusion will bear out any of the steps.

And so Abraham takes up his way to Moriah. For three days he pursues his journey, — time enough for change of purpose, for weakness or hesitation to do its work, enough also to prove his strength and sincerity. God leads us to no hasty conclusions, forces us to no untimely decisions. When you serve God, know well what you are doing; count the cost and weigh the motives. Three days! When the morning dawned, and his rested body fell into accord with the joy of nature, did he not say, "Life is sweet and life is enough: Isaac shall not die!" And when the weary day closed, did not the will flag with the flagging body, and all his purpose flow out into weakness, the tired will slain by untiring love? As he rested before his tent, and saw the stars march in endless procession across the sky, he recalled the word of God that so should his seed be; there were the stars sure and steadfast, and here was his promised seed doomed to death: where and what is God's promise? How, as the days passed, must the tormenting perplexity have increased! How could he be the father of multitudes if Isaac should die? He must put the child to death, yet every promise of God to him, and every plan of God respecting him, turned on the life of the child. The son of promise becomes a child of doom; the child born with laughter is to die as a burnt offering. How can his brain endure all this

fearful contradiction now hourly drawing nigh to its tragical conclusion! Why does it not all slip away as a dream, a sickly jest, a distempered vision? And why does he not take Isaac by the hand and turn back? Doubtless it was the frequent temptation; but faith also has its realities and its victories. It took his son away from him, but it left him God, and this, after all, is what he and all men must have. We can live without our child, but we cannot live without God. Even if there is no God, I cannot go one step without the thought of him. If God is a dream, I must still cherish the dream and live under it, for in that case all other things are but the shadows of dreams. But I believe in God because he *is;* and because he *is*, I must trust him above and before all else: thus I come into his order and righteousness.

So Abraham's mind worked, treading out the path with magnificent certainty, — mighty first steps in that path which each one of us must tread to reach eternal life. For the question before him was that set before us all: Shall we trust God, with the apparent loss of all things; or shall we serve the world and lose God?

The vindication of faith that came to Abraham may come to us all. Let us not press in upon the process with intrusive question. Abraham is not required or permitted to do what he had conceived he must do; still he has thus been led up into the very heights of faith and into the secret of sacrifice. It was not a mortal life that God wanted, but a human will; not an offering, but obedience; not the smoke of an altar, but an ascending trust. Oh, what

a surprise was his when he found that all this wood and fire and altar, were but a formal play, and that the real process had been within himself! He had trusted and followed God up to the last point of obedience, and, lo! Isaac lives, while he himself has died forever to his old, misguided life! Shall not this faith be counted as righteousness? What shall the future life of such a man be but righteousness? What else will he do hereafter but obey God?

This first, ancient lesson is still fresh and binding. God is teaching us all in the same way. Life is a perpetual giving up and laying down; it is wrought into nature; it is the way of Providence; it is the command of Christ. We give up youth and strength and at last life; we lose our gains, our children; we must deny ourselves and take up Christ's cross, — forms of sacrifice, but only forms: they are not final. The thing required will be given back, and meanwhile we ourselves have been carried over into God's world where all things belong. In the history of Abraham the whole circle of faith is complete. In his obedience he gave up Isaac, but Isaac lived, and Abraham henceforth walks as in heaven, for he knows God. But we lose our wealth, and go on in poverty; we lose health and youth, and drop into weakness; we lose children, and never again behold their faces; yet let us not despair. As we trust God, all these Isaacs of the heart will come back to us in God's great day; he takes nothing away from his children that he does not restore. He leads us not in false but yet in blind ways through bitter experiences, till at last our eyes are

opened and we learn with joy what God actually means. Our whole life is often such a trial, a weeping journey of loss and sacrifice, full of wonder and complaint. Why am I so poor; why left so alone? Why do I have this great burden of care? Why is life passing into such disappointment? Why did God take my child? Strange and sad is the journey till we learn to say, "The Lord will provide," and to see that thus God is revealing himself to us; that thus he is striving to give himself to us, and also to preserve for us whatever is good and true. We may be sure that we can never know God except by trusting him in experiences that seem to deny God. We cannot get over into that transcendent world of the spirit except as we die to this. And so God makes us die, — die in our worldly hopes, die in our affections, our ambitions, our passions, our bodies, — that believing in him we may so come to know him.

In this way also we get at the real, inward worth of our blessings that seemed lost. The reward of Abraham's faith was that "in blessing I will bless thee" in a real and vital way. Isaac had been his own son; now he is God's sacred gift. He understands by what tenure he owns and possesses; he understands the law that binds him to the world and to God: no more human sacrifices for him! Any stray sheep caught in a thicket will do for an oblation. What he must do hereafter is to obey and trust God, and that will be the righteousness to be rewarded! Sacrifice is not an act of ecstatic gratitude, nor is it expiation or placation, but is the

obedience and trust of the heart. "Lo! I come to do thy will, O God!"

We should need no better justification of this history than to look into Abraham's mind as he returned to his tent. It is not of Isaac that he now thinks, but of himself. God has been dealing with him, binding his own hesitating limbs upon the altar, piercing his own doubting heart with the knife of sacrifice, slaying all his blind, conflicting thoughts. Yes! he himself has died and there is now a new man, one fit to be named the father of believers, and to head their endless procession. The secret of human order is his: he has learned that the man who trusts in God holds the key of his own destiny, and of human society as well.

As he journeyed back, order was restored to nature, to his own life, to the future of his tribe, to his thoughts of God; for there is no interpreter like a believing heart. The stars once more bespeak his progeny. The child of laughter is still the fountain of joy and hope. In such a revelation, doubtless, his soul became prophetic, and he saw that he had set forth some greater act of sacrifice by which all nations were to be blessed. He felt that this crowning act of his life was in some way connected with this universal blessing. He certainly must have known that he had been dealing with eternal things; that he had been led through the deep, spiritual necessities of man; and that what was so good to him must find at last some universal and consummate expression for all men; and so he foresaw the day and was glad.

The thread that connects Abraham's experience and Christ's sacrifice is subtle, but very real. Get at the heart and inmost meaning of each and they are alike. The secret of Christ's life, that so eludes all his biographers and still more eludes the dogmatists, was a faith in God in behalf of his nation and of humanity and of himself that still held firm while the nation, humanity, and himself passed under death, — counting that God was able to save, and would save, each in spite of death. This is exactly what Abraham did. He had hopes for himself, for his tribe, and for all nations, that turned upon the life of his son. These hopes pass through the ordeal of sacrifice, and so come to real and spiritual fulfillment. Christ passes himself, the nation, humanity, through the sacrifice of obedience, and recovers his own life, saves the nations, and redeems humanity. In the obeying Christ, the trusting and dying Christ, the risen and glorified Christ, all the nations of the earth are blessed. Oh that we all may learn this eternal process and secret of salvation! Believe in God; trust God by obedience to the uttermost; trust him for a way when there is no way, for light when there is no light, for all things when you have nothing, for joy when there is only sorrow, for life when you are in the midst of death: thus you will find at last that faith is not only righteousness, but life and joy and peace.

EVOLUTION AND THE FAITH.

"The agency of God in creation can never be negatived or obscured, but only more clearly revealed, by the unveiling of the processes by which he works.

"Theists, of all others, ought to anticipate the discovery of order and solidarity where there has seemed to be separateness and confusion.

"From the time man became a moral being he was launched upon a sea of conflict. The higher realms of his new nature were not to be entered upon at once. He might not eat of the tree of life, and come as by a leap to the goal. The way to it is the way of warfare. Henceforth the law of his being is not simply a becoming: it is an overcoming." — F. H. Johnson, *Andover Rev.*, 1884, p. 363.

"I am quite sure that the most fundamental factors of evolution are still unknown; that there are more and yet greater factors than are yet dreamed of in our philosophy. But evolution of some kind and according to some law which we yet imperfectly understand, — evolution affecting alike every realm of nature, a universal law of evolution, — is, I believe, a fact which is rapidly approaching recognition." — Prof. Le Conte.

"No theory of evolution clashes with the fundamental ideas of the Bible, so long as it is not denied that there *is* a human species, and that man is distinguished from the lower animals by attributes which we know that he possesses. Whether the first of human kind were created outright, or, as the second narrative in Genesis represents it, were formed out of inorganic material, out of the dust of the ground, or were generated by inferior organized beings, through a metamorphosis of germs, or some other process, — these questions, as they are indifferent to theism, so they are indifferent as regards the substance of biblical teaching." — Prof. George P. Fisher, D. D., LL. D., *The Grounds of Theistic and Christian Belief*, p. 478.

EVOLUTION AND THE FAITH.

For every house is builded by some one; but he that built all things is God. — HEBREWS iii. 4.

THE fears that were felt when the doctrine of evolution was first offered to the world were not unnatural, nor derogatory to the dignity of earnest minds. When a new and revolutionary doctrine involving the nature, the action, and the destiny of humanity is proposed, there is an intuitive wisdom or instinct of self-preservation in man that prompts him to turn on it with resentment and denial. Truth is man's chief heritage; it is his life, and is to be guarded as his life. If lost, he knows that it cannot easily be regained. It is like the golden image of Vishnu that the Hindu was taking to his home from the sacred city: if once laid upon the ground, it could not be taken up again. The keeping of truth is not intrusted merely to our reason, but to our whole nature; every faculty and sentiment, down even to fear and pride, may properly be used in the defense of it.

Reason may at last decide what is truth, but not until it has won the consent of the whole man. The period between the exchange of theories is one in which human nature does not appear in its nobler

guise, but a profound analysis shows that it is acting with subtle, unconscious wisdom. It is better also in the end that a doctrine which is to become truth should run the gauntlet of general denial and opposition. By far the greater part of what is proposed as true in every department turns out to be false. Theories more in number than the wasted blossoms of the May fall fruitless to the ground. If human nature as a whole did not turn on the conceits and dreams that are offered to it, truth itself would have no chance ; it could not extricate itself from the rubbish of folly that over-tolerance has suffered to accumulate. Truth becomes truth by its own achievement ; it must conquer human nature before it can rule it, — win it before it can be loved of it. This wise, spontaneous treatment of new theories delays their acceptance even when proved true, but always with advantage to the truth ; for however fair the final form is to be, it comes unshaped and with entanglements, and often, like some animals, it is born blind. Its first need is criticism, and even criticism based on denial rather than on inquiry ; only it must be criticism, and not blank contradiction.

The advent of the doctrine of evolution is an illustration of these wise and wholesome processes. When it was first proposed in scientific form, it was tossed aside in scorn, as too crude and naked for presentation in the world of thought. Its revival within the latter half of the century provoked a similar storm of disdain and denial ; but it kept its feet, bore its opposition bravely, and now may be said to have won a position, — but by no means in the same

form in which it first appeared. The evolution that is now gaining general acceptance is very different from the evolution propounded twenty years ago. Then it claimed the universe, which it proposed to fill to the exclusion of philosophy and religion. But to-day its place and limits are defined by philosophy, and instead of having the universe as its exclusive domain it has only a section of it, which it holds as the gift, and as still under the supremacy of philosophy. Having at last become presentable to the world of thought and grown shapely and yielded to limitations, it is winning the suffrage of the world and assuming its place in the hierarchy of truth that ministers to humanity. Definition and distinction will be made farther on, but some theory properly known as evolution may now be considered as established, and as already entering into the practical thought of the world.

It may be said that evolution is not yet proved; that it will be soon enough to adjust our faith to it when it has ceased to be a hypothesis and become a full-established theory. The line between hypothesis and theory is seldom defined; it is not a line, but a region. There is much in the doctrine of evolution that is still hypothetical, as there is still in astronomy. But we have sailed far enough in this voyage of search after the creative method to warrant the belief that we draw nigh to the land of our quest. The seaweed of the shore drifts by on the tide, the odors of spicy groves float on the wind, the birds come and go as from a near home, the dim outline in the horizon is changing from cloud to solid

land. The quest is practically ended, and now that we are so near as to catch the ominous thunder of the surf, it is wiser to look out for harbor and anchorage than run the risk of breakers; for evolution, like the coast of all knowledge, is lined by destructive rocks, and also by inlets that run within where safe possession may be taken.

In accepting evolution, it is well to remember that we make no greater change than has several times been made in all the leading departments of human knowledge. In sociology the despotic idea yielded to the monarchical idea, which in turn is now yielding to the democratic idea. In philosophy the deductive method has yielded to the inductive. In religion the priestly idea is yielding to the ministerial. So, in accepting evolution as the general method of creation in place of that which has prevailed, we only repeat the history of the exchange of the Ptolemaic system for the Copernican, and of those new theories of astronomy and geology which forced us to redate the age of the world and of man's life upon it. The wrench to faith and the apparent violation of experience are different, but no more violent than were those of the past. The present incompleteness of evolution has its analogy in the Copernican system, which waited long for the additions of Kepler and Newton; and geology is still an unfinished story. Nor are we justified in withholding our assent to evolution because we cannot each one for ourselves verify its proofs. The vast majority of men could not now verify the Copernican system; it has not even won recognition in human speech: the sun

"rises" and "sets," and will so be spoken of while men watch its apparent motion. Evolution is an induction from many sciences, — chemistry, astronomy, mathematics, geology, botany, biology, — and it is impossible that any but the special student should critically make the induction. But the Copernican system was an induction from mathematics, and even from those higher forms of it that ordinary men never have traced. Its acceptance was, and is still, an act of faith. Belief in evolution should be easier because it is confirmed by several sciences working on independent lines. It is not the biologist alone who proposes evolution, but the astronomer, the chemist, the geologist, the botanist, and the sociologist. I cannot examine and test their processes, but I can trust their conclusions. I do not, however, thus make myself the slave of their opinions, for these opinions run off into other fields where I may be as good a judge as they. I may represent a science as real as theirs, and possibly larger and more authoritative. Hence, in accepting evolution as a probably true history or theory of the method of creation, we do not necessarily yield to all the assumptions and inferences that are often associated with it. It is not above criticism. Like the germ-seeds of which science treats, each one of which threatens to possess the whole earth, and would do so if not checked by other growths, so evolution — shall we say through affinity with its chief theme? — threatens to take possession of the universe. But its myriad thistledown, blown far and wide by every breeze, meets at last the groves of oak

and pine that limit and define its spread. All about these various sciences stands the greater science — philosophy — under which they are included, from which they draw their life, and to which they must bow. Evolution is to be feared not in its bare doctrine of development, but in the scope and relations assigned to it. If it be regarded as universal instead of general, as inclusive of all things instead of a part of all things, it is fatal to morals and religion. If it be regarded as supreme, it gives its own law of necessity to all else. But if it is subordinate to philosophy, if it is considered as under thought-relations, if it is held as finite and relative, it carries no danger to morals or religion or faith. It may possibly modify but it cannot overthrow them, simply because they stand in a larger order.

But evolution is not to be accepted in a simply negative way, — because it can no longer be resisted. We are under no obligation to accept any truth until it is serviceable. It is possible to conceive of truths that would be of no value to men, — such as the constitution of other orders of beings; if made known, it might be passed by. But evolution, properly regarded, is becoming tributary to society, and seems destined to clarify its knowledge, to enlarge and deepen its convictions, to set it upon true lines of action, and to minister to the Christian faith.

Amongst the important services it has begun to render is that it is removing a certain empirical thread that has been interwoven with previous

theories of creation. The unity of creation has never been seriously denied except by extreme thinkers of the dualistic school. But the principle of unity has not been recognized until of late. The bond or ground of unity was justly found in God, but that conception merely asserted that because God is one there is unity in all created things. This may be faith, but it is not philosophy. May not faith become also philosophy? Unity exists not only because one God created all things, but because he works by one process, or according to one principle. As knowledge broadens and wider generalizations are made, we find a certain likeness of process in all realms that indicates one law or method; namely, that of development or evolution. One thing comes from another, assumes a higher and finer form, and presses steadily on towards still finer and higher forms. We find the same method in matter, in brute life, in humanity, in social institutions, in government, in religions, in the progress of Christianity. Let not this thought disturb us. Do we not see that otherwise the universe could have no unity? If God worked on one principle in the material realm, on another in the vital, on another in the social, governmental, and moral realm, there would not be a proper universe. These realms might indeed be regulated and kept from conflict, but they would break up the universe into parts separated by chasms, render knowledge difficult, vain, and disjointed, and create a certain antagonism opposite to the nature of mind. Man would be correlated, not to a universe, but to separate systems and orders, and these varied

correlations would have no underlying unity. It would be difficult to prove the unity of God as against a harmonious polytheism or sovereign Jove. We might believe in one God, but we could not prove our faith. If matter has one principle in its process, and life another, and morals another, why not as many gods? It has not been easy to keep dualism out of philosophy. But, with one principle or method in all realms, we have a key that turns all the wards of the universe, opens all its doors in the past, and will open all in time to come. Knowledge becomes possible and harmonious; a path opens everywhere; the emphasis of the whole universe is thus laid on the unity of God. And when we find not only one method or principle, but the direction of its action, we obtain a prophecy and assurance of the final result of creation that falls in with the highest hopes of Christianity; for the process tends steadily towards the moral. The Church has hoped and striven for a righteousness that shall fill the earth. It may need only its faith to animate and guide it, but it is not amiss to lay its ear upon the earth and hear, if it can, the same word. It is not amiss to see men in prehistoric ages forsaking caves and living in huts, using first a club and then a bow, ores and then metals, nomadic and then in villages. It is not unhelpful to the hope of mankind to see despotism yielding to a class, and the class yielding to the people; personal revenge passing into social punishment of crime by law, and justice slowly creeping to higher forms; penalty first as vindictive, then retributive, and now at last reformatory; first a con-

ception of God as power, then as justice, and finally as love. These evolutionary processes may be woven into the cord by which the Church binds itself to its mighty purpose. It thus secures a broader base for the generalization of its working truths; for the pyramid will not pierce heaven unless it rests upon the whole earth. No truth is perfect that is cut off from other truths.

Evolution not only perfects our conception of the unity of God, but it strengthens the argument from design by which his goodness is proved. This argument may be based on the course of civilization, or on the structure of the eye, or on the working of love. Paley's argument, as Bishop Temple has well shown, stands, with slight modifications, on as strong a basis as ever. But if we can look at the universe both as a whole and in all its processes and in all ages, and find one principle working everywhere, binding together all things, linking one process to another with increasing purpose, and steadily pressing towards a full revelation of God's goodness, we find the argument strengthened by as much as we have enlarged the field of its illustration. But if one part of the universe is abruptly shut off from another, if no stronger bond of unity be assigned to it than that of creative energy, and only the nearlying fields of design are used, then the argument is abridged and may even fall short of an absolute conclusion.

It is felt by some, especially on the first contact with evolution, that it puts God at a distance and hides him behind the laws and processes of nature.

The apprehension is worthy, for we need and crave a near God, and may well dispute any theory that puts him at a distance or fences him off by impenetrable walls. The universal and unappeasable cravings of the heart may always be opposed to what seem to be the laws of nature; for there is a science of the spirit that is as imperative and final in its word as the observed processes of nature. But evolution, properly considered, not only does not put God at a distance, nor obscure his form behind the order of nature, but draws him nearer, and even goes far towards breaking down the walls of mystery that shut him out from human vision. In other words, in evolution we see a *revelation* of God, while in previous theories of creation we had only an *assertion* of God. In evolution we have the first cause working by connected processes in an orderly way; in former theories we had a first cause creating the universe by one omnipotent fiat, ordaining its laws, and then leaving it to its courses or merely upholding it by his power. In respect of nearness, we at once see that evolution brings God nearer than do the other theories. Their hold upon the mind is not at this point, but at another mistaken for it. The religious mind delights in mystery; it is an unconscious assertion by the highest faculties of our nature that we transcend the knowable, — that we belong to, and live and have our destiny in, the infinite. Hence we shrink from theories that seem to undertake to explain God and his working, and repeat with complacence the ancient phrase, "It is impossible; therefore I believe." It gratifies our

reverence to abuse our reason. There is in all this a thread of truth, but the fine thread of reverence is not cut nor drawn out of the web of faith by transferring the mystery of creation, from a point of time and space beyond creation, and putting it continuously into the processes of creation. Mystery enough there is and always will be, and God's ways will never become so familiar and plain that they shall "fade into the light of common day." Instead, this drawing God down and into the processes of creation as a constant and all-pervasive factor, deepens the sense of mystery and awe when we have turned our eyes in that direction. The poet plucks a flower out of the crannied wall, holds it in his hand, and says: —

> "Little flower — but if I could understand
> What you are, root and all, and all in all,
> I should know what God and man is."

In these simple lines we have an expression of the true ground of that form of reverence which is bred by mystery. It is not wonder at primal creation that moves the poet, but the creating power lodged and at work in every roadside flower. Goethe put the same thought into statelier lines: —

> "No! Such a God my worship may not win
> Who lets the world about his finger spin
> A thing extern: my God must rule within,
> And whom I own for Father, God, Creator,
> Hold nature in himself, himself in nature;
> And in his kindly arms embraced, the whole
> Doth live and move by his pervading soul."

Milton built his great epic of creation upon an original creative fiat, but his conception is like his cos-

mology, traditional and unshaped by poetic insight. The greatest poet in these later centuries, he still lacked the highest of poetic qualities, — sympathetic insight into nature. Tennyson, in his one line,

"Closer is he than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet,"

betrays a truer sense of God in creation than is to be found in "Paradise Lost."

It is true that a change in our conception of creation requires a readjustment of our feelings of reverence; and in the transition there may be danger of losing it altogether. It is always easier to change our beliefs than our feelings, and the mind more readily accommodates itself to necessary changes than do the sensibilities. But, whatever the danger and cost, such changes must be made, and in the end there is gain. The eyes are dazzled when a new window lets in more sunshine, and light does the work of darkness, but soon all things are seen more clearly. It cannot be said that, as yet, the conception of creation by evolution touches the mind so deeply and reverently as the former conception. We are still occupied by the details and by the wonder of the truth, and have not connected it with its relations, nor learned to think and feel under it. When a meteor falls to earth, men at first take more heed of its shape and composition than of its origin. It will be found that as we live on under the great truth and discern increasingly its wisdom and harmony, the old sense of reverence will come back to us and become a finer, deeper, intenser feeling than it was under the old conception of creation. It will also be

a more intelligent and better-proportioned reverence. It may be questioned if the reverence excited by the bare fact of creation has any great value. That God created the universe is a truth of supreme importance in philosophy and religion, but a valuable reverence is to be drawn from the later phases and outcome of creation rather than from its beginning and its earlier stages. The first active law in creation of which we know is that of gravitation, but no moral feeling is awakened by the fact that matter attracts inversely to the square of distance. The condition of the world, as it first took spherical shape, could only be regarded with horror, and animal life in the paleozoic ages repels us by its amorphous shapes; nor is it pleasant to picture our not very remote ancestors. Reverence is not to be stirred by that part of creation which is behind us, but by creation as a whole, and by its end. It is only under a theory of evolutionary creation that we can truly wonder and adore God. Otherwise, how shall we think, how feel, before the Power that created those long orders of beings that simply ravened and devoured one another? If those orders were created independently, if they are not necessary links of a whole united in an evolutionary process, their creation cannot be rationally reconciled with any worthy conception of God. But seen as transient forms in an ever-growing process, thrust aside and buried under Devonian strata, and yielding to more shapely and complex orders, and so climbing by an ever-finer transition to some final and perfect end, we not only can tolerate them in thought, but adore the directing Power and delight in his

method. But the feeling of reverence only possesses us as we discern the creative process issuing in man as a moral being. Were creation cut short at man as a physical being, there would be nothing in it to command our reverence, as there would be nothing to satisfy our reason.

Nor should it disturb us to find that our moral qualities have their first intimations in the brute world; that we find in the higher animals hints, forecastings of moral faculty and actions; that as our bodies bear some organic relation to the brutes, so also may our minds. Body is not mind, but they are organically related; sensation is not consciousness, but the latter is conditional on the former. So man is not a brute, but he is organically related to the brute, and the relation may touch his whole nature. Our feeling on this point should be determined, not by the first look, but by its final bearing. If it invalidated our moral faculties, or robbed them of their dignity, or made them less imperative, or separated them in any degree from God, we should be justified in rejecting the theory on the simple ground that these faculties constitute a science in themselves, as commanding and real as physical science. To disown mind before matter is stultification. But there is no such alternative. A relation of the moral faculties to brute qualities may exist without impairing the divineness of conscience and reverence and love. But whatever our feeling, we cannot ignore the fact that in the brute world there are intimations or semblances of moral faculties; nor need we hesitate to say that they are united by the secret cord of the

creative energy. The man of science, observing the development, says that it is brought about by natural forces; the philosopher may grant it, but adds that it is brought about by an intelligent force working freely and progressively, and therefore possibly by increments. Moral qualities are not found in the brutes, but there are the grounds of them — the stuff, so to speak, out of which they are constituted, though not the essence that gives them their particular nature. Their presence there is only an indication that the moral is in the mind and purpose of God, even so far back as in the brute world — a foregleam of the approaching issue. They show the divine purpose to crowd in the moral as soon and as fast as possible, prophesying it long before it can appear, impatient, as it were, with the dull processes behind, and pressing on with yearning speed towards his moral image. We have spoken altogether too long of the brutes with contempt — as though they had nothing of God in them, and were wholly alien to ourselves. It is no degradation of human love that it is organically linked with the brooding care of a brute for her young, nor of self-sacrifice that it is so related to a lioness dying for her whelps, nor of fidelity that it is akin to that of a dog dying for his master. They are not identical, but they are related: they spring from one root, but they reach forth to different issues; they have one motive in common, but in man they have also other motives and other relations. The rudimentary forms of moral qualities in the brute world simply show that the moral element and purpose is present in the entire creative

process. For it was not power that brooded over the elements at the beginning, but love; and the laws of nature are not the cold formulæ of mathematics, but are laws of righteousness and truth. In the most absolute sense these laws are holy, and when they begin to work in the higher brutes they must by their very nature assume a moral aspect or semblance; it cannot be kept out. Life, in its more complex forms, is so dependent upon the moral, or what is practically moral, that it cannot be maintained without it. There could be no gregariousness in the animal world without the action of principles that are essential to morality. It is no impeachment of the dignity or value or imperativeness of a moral faculty that it has come about by growth and differentiation. Indeed, it may stand all the firmer if its root reaches through all grades of life, and strikes down to the centre of the earth. If I can trace my moral qualities throughout the universe, I certainly will not respect them less than if I found them only in some corner of it. We are on false lines of thought when we try to divide creation; more and more does it appear to be an invisible thing bound together by some mysterious, internal bond of unity.

It does not follow that because a moral faculty is brought to full appearance by a combination of qualities or feelings, it has its origin or its essential potentiality in those qualities and feelings, or that it contains no more than is found in them. A combination of two things that produces an effect which neither could produce alone, implies more than is to be found in the two things: there is the *idea* or the

proportion of the combination upon which the effect depends; and this must come from some mind that ordained the proportion, and not from the things themselves. An acid and a base when mingled precipitate a salt, but they are not the authors of the salt; the law of the relation between the acid and the base is the author. The whole process may be set down in mathematical terms, but all the more is it evident that the product originates in the mathematical thought underlying it.

The same may be true of the moral faculties; they may appear as the results of brute qualities through long growth and differentiation, but they are not on that account to be regarded as the product of brute qualities, but of the law under which they have come about. So far from moral faculties originating in brute qualities, though their history may lie in them, they do not become moral except as they cease to be brute qualities. A flower is a flower only by refusing to be a leaf, though it comes about by differentiation from a leaf. So conscience or reverence may have come about by evolution through brute qualities, but they become themselves only by ceasing to be what they were. They get their real and essential nature from the mind that is behind and within the whole process.

If the conclusion disturbs us, if we shrink from linking our nobler faculties with preceding orders, it is because we have as yet no proper conception of the close and interior relation of God to all his works; nor do we stop to see that our attempts to separate ourselves from the previous creation are

reflections upon God's handiwork. Much of the talk upon the theme has a Pharisaic taint. Let us be thankful for existence, however it came about, and let us not deem ourselves too good to be included in the one creation of the one God.

The fact that man may be organically related to the material and brute world does not in itself determine either his nature or his destiny. So long as he is what he is, it does not matter what his history has been, though it may be a matter of consequence how — by what agency — he is differentiated from the brute. But the bare fact of his development from lower nature is not itself a fact that determines anything. It is a hasty and imperfect logic that conjures dark visions out of the relation, and reasons that if man is developed from the brutes he will share their fate. Origin has nothing to do with destiny; we can measure one as little as the other, and we know too little of either to use them as terms of close argument. I may be bound to physical and brute nature by the cord of origin, but that cord does not bind my destiny. A bird might be tied to the earth by a thread of infinite length and the knot never be unloosed, yet it might fly forever into the heavens and away from its source. It is an unreasonable contempt of lower nature that makes us fear it. As we find God in destiny, so we may find him in origin, — present at both ends of his own process and in equal power. Indeed, our chances destiny-wise may be all the better because we are thoroughly interwoven with the whole creation. It is possible that we must be organically

connected with the previous creation in order to share in the eternal order before us; that only thus can we be included in the circle of endless existence. If man is a sporadic and unrelated creation, his destiny hangs upon the arbitrary will that so created him, and gets no promise or assurance from the great order of the universe and its Creator.

Nor need we be disturbed by the claim of an organic relation between the various orders of existence, lest no place be found for the truths and doctrines of religion. This has been the chief ground of alarm in the past. This firm linking of creation into one, this eduction of one phase from another by a natural process, seems to many to shut off the possibility of a revelation, of miracle, of an incarnation, of moral action, of immortality. It seems easier to defend these truths when a creative chasm, so to speak, has been placed between man and the rest of creation; man is more easily handled as a moral and spiritual being when he is treated as an independent creation. It has been feared that if such a chasm were not insisted on, man as a moral being would fall under the laws of the previous creation, and be swamped in necessity, and swallowed up in the general destruction of the previous orders; that so unique a fact as the incarnation could have no justification; that miracle could not be defended in the presence of hitherto universal law; that moral action could not be discriminated from the instinctive action of the brutes, whose action in turn could not be discriminated from the chemic and dynamic action of matter, thus throwing the chain

of materialism about mind and spirit. I grant that these fears would be well grounded if certain theories of evolution were to be accepted as settled — such as the theory that matter has within itself the potentiality of all terrestial life, and goes on in its development alone and by its own energy; a theory that may stand for the various mechanical and atomic doctrines that deify force and dispense with cause. But this theory has a steadily lessening place in the world of thought, for the simple reason that it is a theory that renders thought impossible.

These fears would also be well grounded if the theory were established that what is called *force* or the *forces* were invariable — never more nor less; that they worked only by transmutation and within the original limits; that force itself is an entity. This theory also has no tenable place in philosophy. What is called *force* is the method of the action of a cause, and is not a self-acting entity. Force can proceed only from a will. It is absurd to say of any inanimate thing that it is a force; it may transmit force, but only as it has first received it. Force cannot be conceived except as proceeding from a will; nor can it be observed except as acting under a thought-relation — that is, intelligently towards an end by design. Nor is it the invariable and eternal thing it is claimed to be. Matter existed — logically if not otherwise — before force, and must therefore have received its force from some source or reservoir; and as it works in thought-relations it must have come from an intelligent source that cherishes a design. The claim that force is invariable because

it is so observed is fallacious, simply because observation is limited. In the morning we see the sun go up, and till noon we might say that it will go up forever, but night reverses our observation. It would have been necessary to be present when the foundations of the earth were laid, to be able to say that as the chemic and dynamic passed into the organic there was not an addition of a force. Indeed, when the origin of force is considered, we need not think of it as forever exactly so much and no more, but only as the steady pressure of the Eternal hand upon matter, working uniformly indeed because there is an affinity between force and steadiness, and a divine wisdom in uniformity; but we are under no compulsion either of reason or of observation to assert that this force is without variation. Force begins — where we know not till we postulate God; and it ends — how and where it goes we know not. That it is without play, that it may not be rhythmic and so analogous to the divinest of arts, that it is worked by necessity and not by freedom, is an assumption that is contradicted by every conscious act of the human will. A system that works by law or apparent necessity towards will or freedom as an end, must be grounded in freedom. In the early orders of creation, the divine hand held steadily and evenly the lever of the great engine as it ran along the grooves of changing matter; but when a brute, seeing an enemy in one path, chooses another, there is a hint at least of self-generated force. And it is idle to say that the changes wrought by man on the face of the earth are not the products of his

creative will. These phantoms of necessity, of materialized virtues, of instinctive morality, need no longer disturb us; they are vanishing before the growing light of reason. It is not the better way to assail them with indignant denial; our fierce weapons cleave them through, but they stand, like Miltonic devils, as before. Nor can we exorcise them by the magic of faith; they thus cease to frighten us, but they are not dispelled. The light only will drive them to their caves, and the light is growing.

When evolution is regarded, not as a self-working engine, — an inexorable and unsupervised system, a mysterious section of creation assumed to be the whole, — but rather as a process whose laws are the methods of God's action, and whose force is the steady play of Eternal will throughout matter, there need be no fear lest man and religion be swallowed up in matter and brute life. In other words, man is not correlated to the *process* of creation, but to the *Creator*. Man may bear a certain relation to the process, but his real and absolute relation is to the power over and in the process. We may have come to be what we are through a process of development; much of it may linger on in us; some of its laws still play within us: we eat and procreate as do the brutes; chemical action builds up and takes down our bodies; analogies of its processes reappear in us: evil to be put away, good to be perfected. But we are cut off from our previous history quite as much as we are bound to it, because, the whole process being one of design and man being its fulfillment,

he drops away from it as the apple drops from the tree. The fruit when it is ripe is no longer related to the branch but to its use; it no longer belongs to the tree but to him who planted the tree, and he will use it as seems to him fit. It may be set down as an axiom that *the end of a process cannot be identified with the process.* Man is the final and perfect fruit of creation, and belongs to whatever has the best claim upon him — to morals, if he is found chiefly to belong there. However he came about, out of whatever depths of seeming necessity he has been drawn, he has freedom, consciousness, moral sense, personality. He can obey and disobey, love and hate, do right and wrong. These powers may engender a history that requires all that religion demands — even to a doctrine of the fall, if any care to insist upon it. The phrase, now so prevalent, "a fall upward," indicates confusion of thought. The *fall* was not upward, but it was a *step* upward in the scale of being. It was not till after it that the Lord God said: Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil.[1] There is no scientific reason to be ascribed against the theory that when a free agent finds himself crowned with moral sovereignty, — it matters not how, — he trifles with it, puts his crown under his brutish feet and not on his godlike brow. His past may follow him as a temptation, a deceiving serpent; his future may stand before him as duty upborne by a hope; he may at first drop back towards his past and not hold himself steady to duty. As in creation the

[1] Rev. F. H. Johnson, *Andover Review*, April, 1884, p. 379.

chemic needed more of God in order to become organic, and as the organic needed more of God than could be found in the chemic in order to become vital and conscious, so man may need God in all his fullness and in the perfection of his manifestation in order to become perfectly man. Hence a revelation ; hence the incarnation. If the whole progressive creation is a progressive revelation of God, when its process culminates and ends in man, it is the very thing we might expect; namely, that there should be a full and perfect manifestation of God in the form and with the powers needed to lift humanity up to the level of its destiny. The very thing to be expected, after man has been drawn out of the processes of matter and brought to the verge of the moral and spiritual world, is that he should be provided with a moral and spiritual environment for feeding and protecting his moral nature. However else Christianity may be defined, it is the moral environment of humanity — the bread of its life. Without it the fulfillment and completion of man's destiny as a spiritual being could not be secured. He may have all spiritual faculty within him, but he lacks environment: the spiritual world must be opened to him, it must infold him ; and this is done in a real way and by an actual process in the Christian facts.

If it should appear that these facts and the theory of evolution were incompatible, and the question were raised which must be given up, the answer would be — hold on to the moral and spiritual claim, and let the scientific theory go; for the simple

reason that the moral facts involved in Christianity are more stable and trustworthy than those of physical science. The unknowable thing is matter. It is often said that theories of religion cannot stand up against ascertained knowledge. Doubtless, for nothing can stand up against the truth. But the real question is, what is ascertained knowledge? There is a solidity, a certainty, in moral truth that cannot be claimed for the verdicts of physical science, because moral truth is the direct assertion of personal identity, which is the only thing that we absolutely know; but matter — who can tell us what it is, or trace our relation to it beyond uniformity of impression? Morals are absolute; man knows them because he knows himself, and he can know nothing opposed to them; but physical science is the merest kaleidoscope — turn the tube and you see a new picture. The surest and most universal law in the material world is that of gravitation, but it is unique; it contradicts other laws, and is so mysterious that it can hardly be included in science. As for all else, we wait while the physicists strip from matter one husk after another, and change our definitions accordingly.

The world of mind and morals is not only the authoritative world, but it gives the law to science; the thought of a law of nature goes before the process of the law and determines it. To set physical science and its ascertained knowledge against mental and moral truth is like a shadow turning against the light, or like a flower contradicting the root. It is only by mind that we know matter, and to use a product for discrediting its source is absurd.

Science is all the while solving physical mysteries, not by bringing them within its present terms, but by enlarging its boundaries. There are still many mysteries that sit in the clouds and laugh at our science with its doctrines of force and environment, and there they are likely to remain till science can infold them within a larger circle. The key to the whole subject is a broader generalization ; think far and wide and high, enlarge your science, and perplexity will vanish.

At the risk of repetition I will state the generalization that contains a solution of the questions that put religion in apparent conflict with evolution and its laws. The main fact in evolution is force working uniformly ; but evolution does not explain force ; it receives it from some will, which is its only possible origin. But will is an attribute of personality, and is the basis and a large part of religion. We have, therefore, in religion an original factor which is found in the process of evolution, — not as an essential element, but simply as a method of operation. Religion, therefore, is not compassed by the evolutionary process and laws, but is directly related to the eternal will that imparts its force to the process of evolution. In other words, religion is not correlated to a method of force, but to force itself, that is, to the eternal will. Religion therefore stands in freedom, for will is free. Nature seems to be under apparent necessity, but only apparent because of the uniformity of its action, behind which lies the absolute free will of God. If we were under a different sense of time, a woodsman felling a tree

would seem to be acting under necessity, so uniform and sustained are his strokes; he can stop at any moment, but his purpose keeps his action constant for an hour, which might seem an æon to a differently constituted being. The uniformity in nature is no more indicative of necessity than the uniform shape of printing-letters is indicative that their meaning is contained in their uniform shape. *L-i-b-e-r-t-y* is invariably and necessarily used to spell that word, but it does not therefore mean necessity. A pound-weight is necessarily the same, but does a pound mean only a uniform weight, or does it mean justice in trade? and does it not ultimately mean, and even have its origin in, a will that can choose between just and unjust weights? Clerk Maxwell says that the conservation of energy as illustrated in the processes of nature, which is the ground for the common belief in necessity, is not indicative of its nature, but of some power which so arranges atoms that energy is conserved. Thus the steady play of force is not an original nor an ultimate fact, but is subordinate to some superior fact. The uniformity of nature may mask the fullest freedom.

But if man is involved in the evolutionary process, where and when and how does the free will come in, with all the facts and duties of religion? We may not be able to say when and where, but possibly we can tell how; namely, in the progressive working of God. To produce a will or a person seems to be the end in view of the whole process, and at last it is gained. It is often said that freedom cannot come out of necessity, nor altruism out

of egoism; doubtless, if necessity and egoism are absolute, and not phases of a process. The very uniformity of force may be a condition of the result — freedom, and egoism may be the path to altruism. The difficulty of getting from one to the other is no greater than in passing from the chemical to the vital. But when the result is reached, the conditions under which it was produced may be relaxed. And so we have man — a free will, himself a force acting in creative ways. If it be asked where he gets his free will, the answer is, from the same source from which matter gets its force — God. He may get it *through* nature, but he gets it *from* God working by nature. Hence, when we come to discuss the problems of religion,—duty, conscience, faith, prayer, reverence, love, — we are at full liberty, if we see fit, to turn our back upon that uniformity of nature which seems to rest on necessity. Man stands before the Eternal One, and not before a method of nature. Nature is all about him, but his real relation is to God. His moral qualities may have been evolved through natural processes, but they do not originate there. The flower is evolved through the differentiation of leaves, but it does not originate in them, nor can it be compassed in their differentiation. Not only is science unable to explain the *why* of the differentiation, but it can give no account of the idea of the flower. It may possibly learn to penetrate the process by which leaves become flowers, but it must go to other schools than its own to get the *idea* of the flower as a germ of life and fruit and seed.

I have endeavored to show that the influence of evolution upon the faith turns upon the form or definition of the theory. If evolution be held as simply a mechanical process; if force be regarded as an independent thing, or be blankly named as proceeding from an unknowable cause; if an observed section of the universe in time and space be considered as the whole; if an acknowledged essential factor be left out of account because it seems to be unknowable; if the observed uniformity of nature be interpreted as proof of necessity; if the laws seen in the earlier periods of creation be regarded as universal, and incapable of yielding to other possible laws and forces; if, in brief, there is not a Power before, under, and in all these natural laws and processes, inclusive of them, — a Power working intelligently towards an end, and therefore progressively, and therefore in ways that seem new and even antagonistic to previous methods, — then evolution is dangerous to the faith. It is, of course, illogical to assert that because such theories are dangerous they are untrue — the standing argument of bigotry and ignorance. The path of truth always winds through dangers — abysses below and crumbling cliffs above. We base our protest against these theories on the ground that the logic and the science of the subject are against them. In that court of reason to which men in all ages have repaired for final verdicts — a court not of mere sensations, but of the combined faculties and whole nature of man, where reason, imagination, reverence, love, and all the passions of human nature, stern logic, mathematics, and univer-

sal knowledge are the judges — no verdict for these theories can be found. It can be secured only in a specific school of philosophy known as positivism — a philosophy that postulates reason and then uses it to discredit it — a philosophy of the senses that plays in a pool within the sand-bar, with no eye for the ocean beyond. I would not speak disrespectfully of this school nor of their methods, but I deny their claim to a philosophy. They are useful in their way, and their method is a wise check upon other and better schools of thought. They are good sentries about the castle of truth, quick to descry and drive off the prowling theosophies and demiurgisms that swarm in from the limbo of unreason and wild imagination; good beacons that warn against the reefs and shallow waters of half-way thought and imperfect knowledge; but they are not philosophers, nor is their method one that suits the human mind. If logically held, it runs into pessimism, where it meets its end, for mankind cannot long be induced to think ill of itself. It is enough to say of it here that it is narrow; it does not cover the facts of its own field; it ignores factors that are beyond the limits it has imposed upon itself, and denies the reality of phenomena that may be referred to those factors; it attempts to measure the universe by a rod no longer than the eye can see, and by mathematical laws with total disregard of the thought in these laws. The conflict of the faith is not with the science of evolution, but with the school of thought which claims to be its exponent — a claim, however, that we can with ill grace resist so long

as we spend our time in casting theological stones at evolution. It is time to remember that evolution is the exclusive property of no one school of thought; least of all can it be compassed by a few unquestioned methods of nature, such as a struggle for existence, natural selection, and variation by environment — processes which, if taken by themselves, have more of chance in them than order, and hence are exclusive of a definite end. Evolution may embrace these methods, but it is not defined by them, nor do they contain its secret.

The few principles that have guided and determined the thought of all ages in respect to creation, and, we venture to say, will guide and determine it in all ages to come, are these: A cause must be assumed as soon as an effect is observed; force cannot originate itself, and must proceed from a self-acting agent; a law in action, as in gravitation or crystallization, must be preceded by a thought of the law, and hence the priority of mind; forces working towards an end in a complex and orderly way presuppose a mind and force ordaining the order and the end. These are the granitic foundations underlying evolutionary creation, and they can no more be overlooked or set aside than the process itself. To refer them to an unknowable cause may possibly be correct if we know only what our five senses tell us; if

"All we have power to see is a straight staff bent in a pool."

But to think in this way is to deliberately build a wall around ourselves and then assert that we know nothing of the outside; it is to deny cause and effect,

by resolutely ignoring cause, and dwelling only on effects under the plea that the senses give us only effects and say nothing of cause. The human mind refuses to think in this way, and it disdains to be regarded as a Cerberus that can be appeased by morsels of empty phrase flung to it under the stress of logical demand. The human mind is patient with truth-seekers, but it will not tolerate a philosophy which asserts that because a straight staff seems bent in a pool it is actually crooked. Spenser touches the truth in the couplet: —

> "Why then should witless man so much misween
> That nothing is but that which he hath seen?"

Turning from this philosophy in search of one more consonant with reason, we do not expect to reach the mystery of creation, but we may be able to find lines along which we can travel even though it be forever — an "endless quest," but still one that we can follow without wronging our rational nature. Under what conception, then, can we best contemplate creation? What theory best covers the facts, and what do they require? The one impregnable position, the *fons et origo* of thought upon the subject, is this: Forces that work in complex order and with design are sequents of the thought in the order and design. Before the morning-stars sang together some master prepared the measure. Before matter began to gravitate inversely as the square of distance, some mathematician fixed the problem. Before homogeneous matter at rest became unstable, some will disturbed its equilibrium. Starting thus with One who is force and thought and order, how can

we best connect him with creation and its methods? Shall we conceive of him as simply thought, and so have a mere idealism, — an unreal world? or as force, and so bring up in necessity and the confusion of pessimism that turns on us with furious denial of the validity of reason? or as a mechanician, and so make him external to the world? or as an arbitrary ordainer, forcing on us the question why he did not ordain better and omit the needless early stages of cruelty? Or shall we accept the conception of Immanence, and so have a thought and will and order who is continuously in the processes of creation, and is revealing himself in a real way in them, — a true manifestation? Such a conception covers the facts; under it creation is thinkable. It meets that most imperative of questions, — What is the bond or relation between creation and its source? For we cannot escape the conviction that the relation is organic. We may not be able thus to compass the mystery of creation and lift the whole veil from Isis, but we can at least withdraw a corner and discover the golden feet that uphold it. Our highest possible achievement will be to think rationally of the universe — not to explain it. Science may carry us far; it may be able to link all phases and orders of creation into one whole, and explain the links; it may be able to bring matter and mind, force and feeling, sensation and consciousness, desire and duty, attraction and love, repulsion and hatred, pain and pleasure and conscience, fear and reverence, law and freedom, into some natural relation evolutionary in its character. As all these things are bound up in one human

organism, so they may be united in creation as a whole. As man is a microcosm, so the universe may be the analogue of the human cosmos. In this direction we can think at least without violation of reason, — if forever without reaching a final solution, so be it. But so thinking we escape the absurdity of picking up creation at a point given by the senses and propounding the fragment as a theory of the universe. By so thinking we find that we are constantly transcending limits. The simple fact that we reach a limit implies a knowledge beyond it; and so we find at last that we are correlated to the limitless and have knowledge of it. Thus we learn to pronounce easily and with confidence the Infinite Name; and so naming it, we find it a revelation to us; under it creation gets meaning. We no longer stand on a headland and view creation as a ship rising out of the horizon and sailing past till it sinks again beneath the sky, port whence and port whither unknown, whether swept by currents or guided from within also unknown. Rather do we tread the deck, mark the hand that holds the helm, hear the word that shapes the voyage, and so journey with it to the harbor.[1]

[1] In closing this discourse, in which I have attempted merely to show that the Christian faith is not endangered by evolution, and to separate it from a narrow school of thought with which it is usually associated, it may not be amiss to indicate in a categorical way the lines upon which further study should be pursued: —

I. The respects in which evolution as a necessary process in the natural and brute worlds does not wholly apply to man.

1. Instinct yields to conscious intelligence.

2. The struggle for existence yields to a moral law of preservation, and so is reversed.

3. Intelligence takes the place of natural selection.

4. The will comes into supremacy, and so there is a complete person; man, instead of being wholly under force, becomes himself a force.

5. Man attains full, reflective consciousness.

6. Conscience takes the place of desire.

7. The rudimentary and instinctive virtues of the brutes become moral under will and conscience.

II. Contrasting phenomena of evolution under necessity, and evolution under freedom.

1. Man changes and tends to create his environment; achieves it largely, and so may improve and prolong it. The brute is conformed to environment, but had no power over it.

2. Man progresses under freedom. The brute progressed under laws and environment; man, under will and moral principles of action.

3. Man thinks reflectively, systematizes knowledge and reasons upon it; the brute does not, except in a rudimentary and forecasting way.

4. Man has dominion; the brute is a subject.

5. Man worships, having become conscious of the Infinite One; the brute does not.

6. Man is the end of creation, and the final object of it; the brute is a step in the progress.

The end of a process cannot be identified with the process.

IMMORTALITY AND MODERN THOUGHT.

"Gone forever! ever? No — for since our dying race began,
Ever, ever, and for-ever was the leading light of man."

TENNYSON, *Locksley Hall Sixty Years After.*

"Philosophy can bake no bread; but she can procure for us God, Freedom, Immortality." — NOVALIS.

"The ends for which nature exists are not in itself, but in the spiritual sphere beyond. Nature always points to something beyond itself, backward to a cause, above to a law, and forward to ends in the spiritual system. God is always developing nature to a capacity to be receptive of higher powers. Under the tension of the divine energy in it, it always seems to be 'striving its bounds to overpass.' This discloses in nature a certain reality in Hegel's conception, that nature is always aspiring to return to the spiritual whence it came." — PROF. SAMUEL HARRIS, D. D., LL. D., *The Self-Revelation of God*, p. 485.

"O human soul! so long as thou canst so
Set up a mark of everlasting light,
Above the howling senses' ebb and flow,
To cheer thee, and to right thee if thou roam,
Not with lost toil thou laborest through the night!
Thou mak'st the heaven thou hop'st indeed thy home."

MATTHEW ARNOLD, *Sonnet on East London.*

"Christianity is ever conquering some new province of human nature, some fresh national variety of mankind, some hitherto untenanted, unexplored region of thought or feeling." — *Guesses at Truth*, p. 305.

"Whenever any scientific revolution has driven out old modes of thought, the new views that take their place must justify themselves by the permanent or increasing satisfaction which they are capable of affording to those spiritual demands which cannot be put off or ignored." — LOTZE, *Microcosmus*, Introduction, p. ix.

IMMORTALITY AND MODERN THOUGHT.

But, according to his promise, we look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. — 2 PETER iii. 13.

THE apparent futility that has attended all efforts to prove the immortality of man springs largely from the fact that a sense of immortality is an achievement in morals, and not an inference drawn by logical processes from the nature of things. It is not a demonstration to, or by, the reason, but a conviction gained through the spirit in the process of human life. All truth is an achievement. If you would have truth at its full value, go win it. If there is any truth whose value lies in a moral process, it must be sought by that process. Other avenues will prove hard and uncertain, and will stop short of the goal. Eternal wisdom seems to say: If you would find immortal life, seek it in human life; look neither into the heavens nor the earth, but into your own heart as it fulfills the duty of present existence. We are not mere minds for seeing and hearing truth, but beings set in a real world to achieve it. This is the secret of creation.

But if demonstration cannot yield a full sense of immortality, it does not follow that discussion and

evidence are without value. Mind is auxiliary to spirit, and intellectual conviction may help moral belief. Doubts may be so heavy as to cease to be incentives, and become burdens. If there are any hints of immortality in the world or in the nature of man, we may welcome them. If there are denials of it that lose their force under inspection, we may clear our minds of them, for so we shall be freer to work out the only demonstration that will satisfy us.

Whatever is here said upon this subject has for its end, not demonstration, but a clearing and paving of the way to that demonstration which can be realized only in the process of life, — that is, by personal experience in a spirit of duty. Or, I might say, my object is to make an open and hospitable place for it in the domain of thought.

This result would be nearly gained if it were understood how the idea of immortality came into the world. It cannot be linked with the early superstitions that sprang out of the childhood of the race, — with fetichism and the worship of ancestors; nor is it akin to the early thought that personified and dramatized the forces of nature, and so built up the great mythologies. These were the first rude efforts of men to find a cause of things, and to connect it with themselves in ways of worship and propitiation. But the idea of immortality had no such genesis. It is a late comer into the world. Men worshiped and propitiated long before they attained to a clear conception of a future life. A forecasting shadow of it may have hung over the

early races; a voice not fully articulate may have uttered some syllable of it, and gained at last expression in theories of metempsychosis and visions of Nirvana; but the doctrine of personal immortality belongs to a later age. It grew into the consciousness of the world with the growth of man, — slowly and late, — and marked in its advent the stage of human history when man began to recognize the dignity of his nature. It came with the full consciousness of selfhood, and is the product of man's full and ripe thought; it is not only not allied with the early superstitions, but is the reversal of them. These, in their last analysis, confessed man's subjection to nature and its powers, and shaped themselves into forms of expiation and propitiation; they implied a low and feeble sense of his nature, and turned on his condition rather than on his nature, — on a sense of the external world, and not on a perception of himself. But the assertion of immortality is a triumph over nature, — a denial of its forces. Man marches to the head and says: "I too am to be considered; I also am a power; I may be under the gods, but I claim for myself their destiny; I am allied to nature, but I am its head, and will no longer confess myself to be its slave." The fact of such an origin should not only separate it from the superstitions, where of late there has been a tendency to rank it, but secure for it a large and generous place in the world of speculative thought. We should hesitate before we contradict the convictions of any age that wear these double signs of development and resistance: nor should we treat lightly

any lofty assertions that man may make of himself, especially when those assertions link themselves with truths of well-being and evident duty.

The idea of immortality, thus achieved, naturally allies itself to religion, for a high conception of humanity is in itself religious. It built itself into the foundations of Christianity, and became also its atmosphere and its main postulate, its chief working factor and its ultimate hope. It is of one substance with Christianity — having the same conception of man; it runs along with every duty and doctrine, tallying at every point; it is the inspiration of the system; each names itself by one synonym — life.

Lodged thus in the conviction of the civilized world, the doctrine of immortality met with no serious resistance until it encountered modern science. It may have been weakened and obscured in the feature of personality by pantheistic conceptions that have prevailed from time to time, but pantheism will not prevail in a hurtful degree so long as it stands face to face with the freedom of our Western civilization. A slight infusion of it is wholesome, and necessary to correct an excessive doctrine of individualism, and to perfect the conception of God; and it has never gone far enough in its one line to impair the substantial validity of the doctrine of immortality. We may repeat without hesitation the verse of Emerson, —

"Lost in God, in Godhead found," —

and feel ourselves justified by the greater word of St. Paul: "For in him we live, and move, and have

our being." But when modern science — led by the principle of induction — transferred the thought of men to the physical world, and said, "Let us get at the facts; let us find out what our senses reveal to us," then immortality came under question simply because science could find no data for it. Science, as such, deals only with gases, fluids, and solids, with length, breadth, and thickness. In such a domain and amongst such phenomena no hint even of future existence can be found, and science could only say, "I find no report of it." I do not refer more to the scientific class than to a scientific habit of thought that diffused itself throughout society, and became general by that wise and gracious contagion through which men are led to think together and move in battalions of thought, — for so only can the powers of darkness be driven out. We do not to-day regret that science held itself so rigidly to its field and its principles of induction — that it refused to leap chasms, and to let in guesses for the sake of morals. If it held to its path somewhat narrowly, it still went safely and firmly, and left no gaps in the mighty argument it is framing and will yet perfect. The severity and bigotry that attended its early stages, even with its occasional apparent damage to morals, were the best preparation for the thoroughness of its future work. If its leaders — moved by the conviction that all truth is linked together — at times forsook the field of the three dimensions, and spoke hastily of what might *not* lie beyond it, they are easily forgiven. When scientists and metaphysicians are found in each other's camps, they are not

to be regarded as intruders, even if they have not learned the pass-word, but rather as visitors from another corps of the grand army. The sappers and miners may undervalue the flying artillery, and the cavalry may gird at the builders of earthworks; but as the campaign goes on each will come to recognize the value of the other, and perhaps, in some dark night of defeat when the forces of the common enemy are pressing them in the rear, they will welcome the skill of those who can throw a bridge across the fatal river in front to the unseen shore beyond.

But science has its phases and its progress. It held itself to its prescribed task of searching matter until it eluded science in the form of simple force — leaving it, so to speak, empty-handed. It had got a little deeper into the heavens with its lenses, and gone a little farther into matter with its retorts, but it had come no nearer the nature of things than it was at the outset. I may cleave a rock once and have no proper explanation of it, but I know as little when I have cleaved it a thousand times and fused it in flame. In these researches of science many useful facts have been passed over to man, so that easier answer is given to the question, What shall we eat and wherewithal shall we be clothed? But it has come no nearer to an answer of those imperative questions which the human mind will ask until they are answered — Whence? How? For what? Not what shall I eat and how shall I be clothed, but what is the meaning of the world? explain me to myself; tell me what sort of a being I am — how I came to be here, and for what end. Such are

the questions that men are forever repeating to themselves, and casting upon the wise for possible answer. When chemistry put the key of the physical universe into the hand of science, it was well enough to give up a century to the dazzling picture it revealed. A century of concentrated and universal gaze at the world out of whose dust we are made, and whose forces play in the throbs of our hearts, is not too much; but having sat so long before the brilliant play of elemental flames, and seen ourselves reduced to simple gas and force under laws for whose strength adamant is no measure, we have become restive and take up again the old questions. Science has not explained us to ourselves, nor compassed us in its retort, nor measured us in its law of continuity. You have shown me of what I am made, how put together, and linked my action to the invariable energy of the universe; now tell me what I am; explain to me consciousness, will, thought, desire, love, veneration. I confess myself to be all you say, but I know myself to be more; tell me what that more is. Science, in its early and wisely narrow sense, could not respond to these demands. But it has enlarged its vocation under two impulses. It has pushed its researches until it has reached verges beyond which it cannot go, yet sees forces and phenomena that it cannot explain nor even speak of without using the nomenclature of metaphysics. In a recent able work of science the word "spirit" is adopted into the scientific vocabulary. Again, physical science has yielded to the necessity of allying itself with other sciences —

finding itself on their borders. Chemistry led up to biology, and this in turn to psychology, and so on to sociology and history and religion, and even to metaphysics, whose tools it used with some disdain of their source. In short, it is found that there is no such thing as a specific science, but that all sciences are parts of one universal science. The broad studies of the day have done much toward establishing this conviction, which has brought about what may be called a comity of the sciences, or an era of good feeling. The chemist sits down by the metaphysician and says, Tell me what you know about consciousness ; and the theologian listens eagerly to the story of evolution. Unless we greatly misread the temper of recent science, it is ready to pass over to theology certain phenomena it has discovered and questions it has raised. And with more confidence we may assert that theology is parting with the conceit it had assumed as "queen of the sciences," and — clothing itself with its proper humility — is ready to accept a report from any who can aid it in its exalted studies.

This comity between the sciences, or rather necessary correlation, not only leads to good feeling and mutual respect, but insures a recognition of each other's conclusions. Whatever is true in one must be true in all. Whatever is necessary to the perfection of one cannot be ruled out of another. That which is true in man's spiritual life must be true in his social life ; and whatever is true in social life must not contradict anything in his physical life. We might reverse this, and say that no true phys-

iologist will define the physical man so as to exclude the social man; nor will he so define the social and political man as to shut out the spiritual man; nor will he so define the common humanity as to exclude personality. He will leave a margin for other sciences whose claims are as valid as those of his own. If, for example, immortality is a necessary coördinate of man's moral nature, — an evident part of its content, — the chemist and physiologist will not set it aside because they find no report of it in their fields. If it is a part of spiritual and moral science, it cannot be rejected because it is not found in physical science. So much, at least, has been gained by the new comity in the sciences, — that opinions are respected, and questions that belong to other departments are relegated to them in a scientific spirit.

But this negative attitude of natural science toward immortality does not by any means describe its relation to the great doctrine. The very breadth of its studies has made it humble and tolerant of hypothesis in other fields. It is parting with a narrow and confining positivism, and is keenly alive to the analogies and sweep of the great truths it has discovered — truths which, as science, it cannot handle. More than this: while it has taught us to distrust immortality, because it could show us no appearance of it, it has provided us with a broader principle that undoes its work, — namely, the principle of reversing appearances. The whole work of natural science might be described under this phrase; it has laid hold of the physical universe

and shown that the reality is unlike that which first appears. It has thus bred a fine, wholesome skepticism which is the basis of true knowledge and of progress. Once men said, This is as it appears; today they say, The reality is not according to the first appearance, but is probably the reverse. The sky seems solid; the sun seems to move; the earth seems to be at rest, and to be flat. Science has reversed these appearances and beliefs. But the Copernican revolution was simply the beginning of an endless process, and science has done little since but exchange Ptolemaic appearance for Copernican reality, and the process is commonly marked by reversal. Matter seems to be solid and at rest; it is shown to be the contrary. The energy of an active agent seems to end with disorganization, but it really passes into another form. So it is throughout. The appearance in nature is nearly always, not false, but illusive, and our first interpretations of natural phenomena usually are the reverse of the reality. Of course this must be so; it is the wisdom of creation — the secret of the world; else knowledge would be immediate and without process, and man a mere eye for seeing. Nature puts the reality at a distance and hides it behind a veil, and it is the office of mind in its relation to matter to penetrate the distance and get behind the veil; and to make the process valuable in the highest degree, this feature of contrariety is put into nature. What greater achievement has mind wrought than to turn the solid heavens into empty space, fix the moving sun in the heavens, and round the flat

world into a sphere? Truth is always an achievement, and it becomes such by reversing appearance — turning rest into motion, solids into fluids, centres into orbits, breaking up inclosing firmaments into infinite spaces. The human mind tends to rest in the first appearance; science, more than any other teacher, tells it that it may not. But it is this premature confidence in first appearance that induces skepticism of immortality. Our inmost soul pleads for it; our higher nature disdains a denial of it as ignoble. No poet, no lofty thinker suffers the eclipse of it to fall upon his page, but many a poet and thinker is — nay, are we not all? — tormented by a horrible uncertainty cast by the appearance of dissolving nature, and reënforced by the blank stillness of science? The heavens are empty; the earth is resolving back to fire-mist; what theatre is there for living men? Thought and emotion are made one with the force of the universe, shut up for a while in a fleeting organism. What is there besides it? Brought together out of nature, sinking back into nature, — has man any other history? What, also, is so absolute in its appearance as death? How silent are the generations behind us. How fast locked is the door of the grave. How speechless the speaking lips; how sightless the seeing eye; how still the moving form. Touch the cold hand; cry to the ear; crown the brow with weed or with flower — they are alike to it. It is an awful appearance; is it absolute — final? Say what we will, here is the source of the dread misgiving that haunts the mind of the age. Science has helped to create it,

but it also has discovered its antidote. The minister of faith stands by this horrible appearance and says: "Not here, but risen." He might well be joined by the priest of science with words like these: "My vocation is to wrest truth out of illusive appearances. I do not find what you claim; I find instead an appearance of the contrary; but on that very principle you may be right; the truth is generally the reverse of the appearance." I do not advance this as an argument, but to create an atmosphere for argument. We still think of death under Ptolemaic illusion; we have not yet learned the secret of the world, the order of truth — inverting the landscape in the lens of the eye that the mind may get a true picture. To break away from the appearance of death — this is the imperative need; and whatever science may say in detail, its larger word and also its method justify us in the effort. Hence the need of the imaginative eye and of noble thought. Men of lofty imagination are seldom deceived by death, surmounting more easily the illusions of sense. Victor Hugo probably knows far less of science than do Büchner and Vogt, but he knows a thousand things they have not dreamed of, which invest their science like an atmosphere, and turn its rays in directions unknown to them. Goethe was a man of science, but he was also a poet, and did not go amiss on this subject.

I pass now to more positive ground, — speaking still of science, for the antagonist of immortality is not science, but a contagion or filtration from it that permeates common thought.

Assuming evolution, — it matters not now what

form of it, except the extremest which is not worthy of the name of science, — I remark that the process of development creates a skepticism at every stage of its progress so great that one has no occasion even to hesitate when the claim of immortality is made. Doubt has so often broken down that it is no longer wise to doubt. Improbability has so often given way to certainty and fact that it becomes almost a basis of expectation. One who traces evolution step by step, and sees one miracle follow another, should be prepared at the end to say, "I will wonder no longer at anything; I have turned too many sharp corners to be surprised at another." Take your stand at any stage of evolution, and the next step is no stranger, no more to be anticipated, no broader leap than that from death to future life. Plant yourself at any given stage, with the knowledge then given off by phenomena, and report what you can see ahead. Go back to the time when the swirl of fire-mist was drawing into spheres, and predicate future life: the raging elements laugh you to scorn. Life from fire! — no dream of metempsychosis is so wild as that. You detect a law of progress; but to what are you now listening — to the elements or to mind? The elements can tell you nothing, but mind detects a law in the elements that affords a ground for expectation. The appearance silences you; the hint leads you on, and you become perhaps a very credulous and unscientific believer, confronted by scientific facts to the contrary. If one is skeptical of the reality of the spiritual world on scientific grounds,

or on the score of simple improbability, the best practical advice that can be given him is — to transport himself back into early geologic or chemic ages, and then attempt to use a positive philosophy to find out what shall or shall not be, on the ground of appearance. But I yield too much; the development of life from nebulous fire is a fact so immensely improbable, that we cannot conceive of ourselves as accepting it. Take later contrasts, — the headless mollusk in a world of water, and an antlered deer in a world of verdure; or the huge monsters of the prime, and thinking man. Here are gulfs across which contemporaneous imagination cannot leap, but looking back we see that they have been crossed, and by a process of orderly development, in embryology if not in the rocks and museums. We see the process and the energy by which it was wrought, but of the source of the process or of the energy we know nothing until we postulate it. But, shut off as we are at every stage of the process from the next by its improbability, and only able to accept it as we look back upon it, and even then with an essential unknown factor at work, — what right have we, with so confounding a history behind us, to cut it short and close it up with a doubt on the ground of improbability? Are we not rather taught to expect other wonders? I am quite ready to hear the answer of science, that the process under which immortality is claimed is unlike that of development, — that it cannot be gained under the same laws nor according to the same method. Evolution does not spare the individual nor the class. Life, as we see it, is a

functional play of something — we know not what — set in favorable relations to an environment, and ending when the relations become unfavorable. When environment ceases to play well into the organization, and the organization fails to adjust itself to the changing environment, life ends; and the life of that organization cannot go on because it was simply a thing of relations which have been destroyed. This seems logical, and would be final if all the factors and all their processes were embraced and understood in the argument. This, we claim, is not the case, but, on the contrary, claim that there are factors and elements not recognized, which may involve other processes and another history. Science responds: This is all we find; we cannot go outside of the facts and the processes; life is a functional play of something, — we know not what; but, not knowing it, we have no right to deal with it, and so set it aside.

This is the crucial point upon which immortality as a speculative question turns. Shall it be silenced in its claims on such evidence? Is there no higher tribunal, of wider powers and profounder wisdom, before which it may plead its eternal cause? We turn to that which is the substantial method of all ages, — the necessary habit of the human mind, — to philosophy.

We now have the grave question whether we are to be limited in our thought and belief by the *dicta* of physical science. In accounting for all things, are we shut up to matter and force and their phenomena? Science as positivism says: Yes, because

matter and force are all we know, or can know. Another school says boldly: Matter and force account for all things, — thought, and will, and consciousness; a position denied by still another school, which admits the existence of something else, but claims that it is unknowable. If any one of these positions is admitted, the question we are considering is an idle one, so far as demonstration is concerned; it is even decided in the negative. The antagonist to these positions is metaphysics. Faith may surmount, but it cannot confute them without the aid of philosophy. And how goes the battle? I think an impartial judge of this friendly conflict, in which a man is often arrayed against himself, would say that metaphysics not only holds, but is master of the field. At least, science is speechless before several fundamental questions that it has itself put into the mouth of philosophy. Science begins with matter in a homogeneous state of diffusion, — that is, at rest and without action, either eternally so, or as the result of exhausted force. Now, whence comes force? Science has no answer except such as is couched under the phrase "an unknowable cause," which is a contradiction of terms, since a cause with a visible result is so far forth known. Again, there are mathematical formulæ, or thought, in the stars, and in matter as in crystallization. The law or thought of gravitation necessarily goes before its action. What is the origin of this law as it begins to act? — and why does it begin to act in matter at rest? — a double question to which science renders no answer except to the latter part, which it

solves by polarization; but this is simply putting the tortoise under the elephant. Again, evolution, as interpreted by all the better schools of science, admits teleology, or an end in view; and the end is humanity. But the teleological end was present when the nebulous matter first began to move. In what did this purpose then reside? — in the nebulous matter, or in some mind outside of matter and capable of the conception of man?

Again, how do you pass from functional action of the brain to consciousness? Science does not undertake to answer, but confesses that the chasm is impassable from its side. What, then, shall we do with the fact and phenomena of consciousness? Again, what right has science, knowing nothing of the origin of force, and therefore not understanding its full nature, — what right has it to limit its action and its potentiality to the functional play of an organism? As science it can, of course, go no farther; but, with an unknown factor, on what ground can it make a negative and final assertion as to the capability of that factor? Again, you test and measure matter by mind; but if matter is inclusive of mind, how can matter be tested and measured by it? It is one clod or crystal analyzing another; it is getting into the scales along with the thing you would weigh.

These are specimens of the questions that philosophy puts to science — or rather, as I prefer to phrase it, that one's mind puts to one's senses. The observing senses are silent before the thinking mind. But these questions are universal and im-

perative. No further word of denial or assertion can be spoken until they are answered. And as science does not answer them, philosophy undertakes to do so, and its answer is — Theism. The universe requires a creating mind; it rests on mind and power. Philosophy holds the field, and on its triumphant banner is the name of God. Science might also be pressed into close quarters as to the nature of this thing that it calls *matter*, which it thinks it can see and feel; but how it sees and feels it, it does not know. When Sir William Thompson — led by a hint of Faraday's — advances the theory that all the properties of matter probably are attributes of motion, a surmise is awakened if matter be not a mere semblance or phantasm; and if force, or that which creates force, is not the only reality — a true substance upon which this play and flux of unstable matter takes place. Under this theory of advanced science, it is no longer spirit that seems vague, illusive, unreal, but matter — slipping away into modes of motion, dissolving into mere activity, and so shading off toward some great Reality that is full of life and energy — not matter, and therefore spirit. Science itself has led up to a point where matter, and not God, becomes the unknowable. A little further struggle through this tangle of matter, and we may stand on a "peak of Darien" in "wild surmise" before the ocean of the Spirit.

The final word which the philosophical man within us addresses to our scientific man is this: Stop when you come to what seems to you to be an end of man; and for this imperative reason, namely, you do not

claim that you have compassed him; you find in him that which you cannot explain — something that lies back of energy and function, and is the cause or ground of the play of function; you admit consciousness; you admit that while thought depends upon tissue, it is not tissue nor the action of tissue, and therefore may have some other ground of action; you admit an impassable chasm between brain-action and consciousness. What right has science as science to leap that chasm with a negative in its hand? And why should science object to attempts to bridge the chasm from the other side? Physical science has left unexplained phenomena; may no other science take them up? Science has left an entity — a something that it has felt but could not grasp, just as it has felt but could not grasp the ether; may not the science that gave to physics the space-filling ether try its hand at this unexplained remainder? Let us have, then, no negative assertions, — the bigotry of science. A generous-minded science will pass over this mystery to psychology, or to metaphysics, or to theology. If it is a substance, it has laws. If it is a force or a life, it has an environment and a correspondence. If it is mind and spirit, it has a mental and spiritual environment; and if the correspondence is perfect and the environment ample enough, this mind and spirit may have a commensurate history. This is logical, and also probable, even on the ground of science, for its analogies indicate and sustain it. My conclusion is this: Until natural science can answer these questions put by other sciences, it has no right to assume the solu-

tion of the problem of immortality, because this question lies within the domain of the unanswered questions. Not to the Trojan belongs the wounded immortal Diomed, but to the Greek, who vindicates the claim of his heart by the strength of his weapons.

But has science no positive word to offer? The seeming antagonist of immortality during its earlier studies of evolution, it now seems, in its later studies, about to become an ally. It suddenly discovered that man was in the category of the brutes and of the whole previous order of development. It is now more than suspecting that, although in that order, he stands in a relation to it that forbids his being merged in it, and exempts him from a full action of its laws, and therefore presumably from its destinies. It has discovered that because man is the end of development he is not wholly in it — the product of a process, and for that very reason cut off from the process. What thing is there which is made by man, or by nature after a plan and for an end, that is not separated from the process when it is finished, set in entirely different relations and put to different uses? When we build a wagon, we gather metal and wood, bring them together, forge, hew, fit, and paint till it is made; but we do not then break it into pieces, cast the iron into the forge and the timber into the forest; we wheel it out of the shop and put it to its uses which have little to do with the processes by which it was framed, — made under one set of laws but used under another. When a child is born, the first thing done is to sever the cord that binds it to

its origin and through which it became what it is. And what is creation with its progressive and orderly development, — heat acting upon matter overshadowed by the Spirit; then a simple play of forces; at length a quickening into life, and then a taking on of higher and more complex forms, till at last the hour comes and man is born into the world, — what is creation but a divine incubation or gestation within the womb of eternity? The thought is startling, but I disclaim a rhetorical interpretation and offer it as a generalization of science. What then? The embryotic condition and processes and laws are left behind, and man walks forth under the heavens — the child of the stars and of the earth, born of their long travail, their perfect and only offspring. Now he has new conditions, new laws, new methods and ends of his own. Now we have the image of the creating God — the child of the begetting Spirit.

It is to such conclusions that recent science is leading. Briefly stated, my thought is this: Man is the end or product that nature had in view during the whole process of evolution; when he is produced, the process ceases, and its laws either end at once or gradually, or take on a form supplementary to other laws, or are actually reversed. Thus, the struggle for existence ceases, and a moral or humane law of preservation takes its place. The secret of history is the dethronement of the strong by the weak, or rather the introduction of a force by which the meek become the inheritors and rulers of the earth. Natural selection gives way to intelligent choice. In-

stinct nearly ends, and thought determines action. The whole brute inheritance is being gradually thrown off; its methods constitute evil — the serpent whose head the seed of woman is bruising and shall finally crush. The imperative conclusion follows that man is not to be regarded as in the process, nor under the laws, nor even under the analogies of the order from which he has been evolved or created. The leaden suggestion of nature, as it destroyed the individual and the type, no longer has even scientific weight. The thing that has been is the very thing that shall not be; and Tennyson, with this fresh page of science before him, could now stretch out towards his great hope hands no longer lame, and gather something more than dust and chaff as he calls to the Lord of all; for it is the appearance and analogy of nature that crush our hope. But science itself bids us turn our back upon physical nature, or but look to it to find that we are no longer of it.

The importance of this generalization or revelation of science cannot be exaggerated. Canon Mozley, in his great sermon on Eternal Life, says substantially, "It does not matter how we came to be what we are; we are what we are," and from that builds up his masterly argument for immortality. Still, it does matter whether we face the great question weighted by our previous history or freed from it. It is possible, indeed, to scale the heights of our hope burdened with the clay out of which we were made; but why bear it, when friendly science offers to take it off? Besides, man is a logical being, and he can-

not be induced to leave unexplained phenomena behind him, nor to leap chasms in his thought; nor will he build the heavenly city upon reason while it is confused by its relations to physical nature. So freed, we have man as mind and spirit, evolved or created out of nature, but no longer correlated to its methods, — correlated instead to contrasting methods, — face to face with laws and forces hitherto unknown or but dimly shadowed, moving steadily in a direction opposite to that in which he was produced.

Receiving man thus at the hands of science, what shall we do with him but pass him over into the world to the verge of which science has brought him — the world of mind and spirit? From cosmic dust he has become a true person. What now? The end of the demiurgic strife reached, its methods cease. Steps lead up to the apex of the pyramid. What remains? What, indeed, but flight, if he be found to have wings? Or does he stand for a moment on the summit, exulting in his emergence from nature, only to fall back into the dust at its base? There is a reason why the reptile should become a mammal: it is more life. Is there no like reason for man? Shall he not have more life? If not, then to be a reptile is better than to be a man, for it can be more than itself; and man, instead of being the head of nature, goes to its foot. The dream of pessimism becomes a reality, justifying the remark of Schopenhauer that consciousness is the mistake and malady of nature. If man becomes no more than he now is, the whole process of gain and advance by which he has become

what he is turns on itself and reverses its order. The benevolent purpose, seen at every stage as it yields to the next, stops its action, dies out, and goes no farther. The ever-swelling bubble of existence, that has grown and distended till it reflects the light of heaven in all its glorious tints, bursts on the instant into nothingness.

The question is, whether such considerations are subjects for thought; whether they have in them an element of reason that justifies a conclusion; whether they are phenomena, and may be treated scientifically; whether they do not address us in a way as impressive as physical science could address us at any particular stage of evolution. Having thought up to this point and found always a path leading through the improbabilities of the future, shall we cease to think because we face other improbabilities? We cannot, indeed, think facts out of existence — the world is real; but natural science justifies us in regarding man as under the laws of the intellectual and moral world into which it has delivered him. It has shown us the chemical coming under the subjection of the dynamic, and the dynamic yielding to the organic, and the organic, with man in it and over it, working miracles of his own — a power over nature, under laws that are neither chemical, nor dynamic, nor organic, but creative in their essence, and spiritual in their force. He is therefore to be measured, not by the orders behind him, but by those into which he has come

Proceeding now under theistic conceptions, I am confident that our scientific self goes along with our

reasoning self when I claim that the process of evolution at every step and in every moment rests on God, and draws its energy from God. The relation, doubtless, is organic, but no less are its processes conscious, voluntary, creative acts. Life was crowded into the process as fast as the plan admitted; it was life and more life till the process culminated in man — the end towards which it had been steadily pressing. We have in this process the surest possible ground of expectation that God will crown his continuous gift of life with immortal life. When, at last, he has produced a being who is the image of himself, who has full consciousness and the creative will, who can act in righteousness, who can adore and love and commune with his Creator, there is a reason — and if there is a reason there will be found a method — why the gift of immortal life should be conferred. God has at last secured in man the image of himself — an end and solution of the whole process. Will he not set man in permanent and perfect relations? Having elaborated his jewel till it reflects himself, does he gaze upon it for a briefer moment than he spent in producing it, and then cast it back into elemental chaos? Science itself forces upon us the imperious question, and to science also are we indebted for a hopeful answer — teaching us at last that we are not bound to think of man as under the conditions and laws that produced him, — the *end* of the creative process, and therefore not *of* it. Such is the logic of evolution, and we could not well do without it. But we must follow it to its conclusions. Receiving at its hands a Creating Mind

working by a teleological process toward man as the final product, we are bound to think consistently of these factors; nor may we stop in our thought and leave them in confusion. If immortality seems a difficult problem, the denial or doubt of it casts upon us one more difficult. We have an intelligent Creator starting with such elements as cosmic dust, proceeding in an orderly process, developing the solid globe; then orders of life that hardly escape matter; then other orders that simply eat and move and procreate; and so on to higher forms, but always aiming at man, for "the clod must think," the crystal must reason, and the fire must love, — all pressing steadily toward man, for whom the process has gone on and in whom it ends, because he — being what he is — turns on these very laws that produced him and reverses their action. The instincts have died out; for necessity there is freedom; for desire there is conscience; natural selection is lost in intelligence; the struggle for existence is checked and actually reversed under the moral nature, so that the weak live and the strong perish unless they protect the weak. A being who puts a contrast on all the ravening creation behind him, and lifts his face toward the heavens in adoration, and throws the arms of his saving love around all living things, and so falls into sympathetic affinity with God himself and becomes a conscious creator of what is good and true and beautiful — such is man. What will God do with this being, the product of countless æons of creative energy? What will God do with his own image? is the piercing question put to reason. I speak of ideal

man — the man that has been and shall be; of the meek who inherit the earth and rule over it in the sovereign power of love and goodness. How much of time, what field of existence and action, will God grant to this being? The pulses of his heart wear out in less than a hundred years. Ten years are required for intelligence to replace the loss of instinct, so that relatively his full life is briefer than that of the higher animals. A quarter of his years is required for physical and mental development; a half is left for work and achievement, and the rest for dying. And he dies saying: I am the product of eternity, and I can return into eternity; I have lived under the inspiration of eternal life, and I may claim it; I have loved my God, my child, my brother man, and I know that love is an eternal thing; it has so announced itself to me, and I pass into its perfect and eternal realization. Measure this being thus, and then ask reason, ask God himself, if his mortal life is a reasonable existence. There is no proportion between the production of man and his duration; it is like spending a thousand years in building a pyrotechnic piece that burns against the sky for one moment and leaves the blackness of a night never again to be lighted. Such a destiny can be correlated to no possible conception of God nor of the world except that of pessimism — the philosophy of chaos — the logic that assumes order to prove disorder — that uses consciousness to show that it is a disease. But any rational conception of God forces us to the conclusion that he will hold on to the final product of his long, creative

process. If man were simply a value, a fruit of use, an actor of intelligence, a creator of good, he would be worth preserving; but if God loves man and man loves God, and so together they realize the ultimate and highest conception of being and destiny, it is impossible to believe that the knife of Omnipotence will cut the cords of that love and suffer man to fall back into elemental flames; for, if we do not live when we die, we pass into the realm of oxygen. Perhaps it is our destiny — it must be under some theories; but it is not yet necessary under any accredited theory of science or philosophy to conceive of God as a Moloch burning his children in his fiery arms, nor as a Saturn devouring his own offspring.

I am well aware that just here a distinction is made that takes off the edge of these horrible conclusions, — namely, that humanity survives though the individual perishes. This theory, which is not recent, has its origin in that phase of nature which shows a constant disregard of the individual and a steady care for the type or class. It found its way from science into literature, where it took on the form of lofty sentiment and became almost a religion. It is a product of the too hasty theory that we may carry the analogies of nature over into the world of man, and lay them down squarely and without qualification as though they compassed him. Science no longer does this, but the blunder lives on in literature and the every-day thought of the world. But suppose it were true that the individual perishes and humanity survives, how much relief

does it afford to thought? It simply lengthens the day that must end in horrible doom. For the question recurs, how long will humanity continue? For long, indeed, if man can preserve the illusion of immortality and the kindred illusions of love and duty and sacrifice that go with it, and can be kept apart from an altruism that defeats itself by cutting the nerve of personality. Humanity will stay long upon the earth if love and conscience are fed by their proper and only sustaining inspirations; but even then how long will the earth entertain that golden era when the individual shall peacefully live out his allotted years, and yield up the store of his life to the general fund of humanity, in the utter content of perfect negation? I might perhaps make a total sacrifice for an eternal good, but I will sit down with the pessimists sooner than sacrifice myself for a temporary good; the total cannot be correlated to the temporary. If such sacrifice is ever made, it is the insanity of self-estimate, or rather is the outcome of an unconscious sense of a continuous life. How long do I live on in humanity? Only till the crust of the earth becomes a little thicker, and days and nights grow longer, and the earth sucks the air into its "interlunar caves" — now a sister to the moon. Chaos does not lie behind this world, but ahead.

"Many an æon moulded earth before her highest man was born;
Many an æon, too, may pass when earth is manless and forlorn."

The picture of the evolution of man through "dragons of the prime" is not so dreadful as that foreshadowed when the world shall have grown old, and environment no longer favors full life. Humanity

may mount high, but it must go down and reverse the steps of its ascent. Its lofty altruism will die out under hard conditions; the struggle for existence will again resume its sway, and hungry hordes will fish in shallowing seas, and roam in the blasted forests of a dying world, breathing a thin atmosphere under which man shrinks towards inevitable extinction. Science paints the picture, but reason disdains it as the probable outcome of humanity. The future of this world as the abode of humanity is a mystery, though not wholly a dark one; but under no possible conception can the world be regarded as the theatre of the total history of the race.

A modification of this view is the theory that sets aside personality and asserts a return of the individual life into God. Mr. Emerson in an essay, the suggestive value of which is very great, says: "I confess that everything connected with our personality fails." It would be easy to quote Emerson against himself, but that were no gain. He wrote this sentence too early to have the advantage of recent science. In that play of nature on which he fixed his gaze years before Darwin, he saw indeed that "nature never spares the individual," but his prophetic soul did not reveal to him the things to be. The interpretation of science, as now given, tells us that when man is reached in the process of development nature does spare the individual, or, more properly, the person. It is the very thing nature has been aiming at all along, namely, to produce a person and then preserve him. The whole trend of the laws in social and intelligent humanity is toward

securing a full personality, and a defense and perpetuity of it. Emerson apparently never caught sight of the fact that in humanity there is a reversal of those laws by which matter and brute-life led up to man. He looked at nature more closely than Plato dared, and was dazzled.

This altruism which assumes for itself a loftier morality in its willingness to part with personality and live on simply as influence and force, sweetening human life and deepening the blue of heaven, — a view that colors some unfortunate pages of both literature and science, — is one of those theories that contains within itself its own refutation. It regards personality almost as an immorality: lose yourself in the general good; it is but selfish to claim existence for self. It may be, indeed, but not if personality has attained to the law of love and service. Personality may not only reverse the law of selfishness, but it is the only condition under which it can be wholly reversed. If I can remain a person, I can love and serve, — I may be a perpetual generator of love and service; but if I cease to exist, I cease to create them, and leave a mere echo or trailing influence thinning out into an unmeaning universe. Such an altruism limits the use and force of character to the small opportunity of human life; it is so much and no more, however long it may continue to act; but the altruism of ideal and enduring personality continues to act forever, and possibly on an increasing scale. This altruism of benevolent annihilation cuts away the basis of its action; it pauperizes itself by one act of giving, — breaks its bank in the generosity

of its issue. It is one thing to see the difficulties in the way of immortality, but quite another thing to erect annihilation into morality; and it is simply a blunder in logic to claim for such morality a superiority over that of those who hope to live on, wearing the crown of personality that struggling nature has placed on their heads, and serving its Author forever and ever. The simple desire to live is neither moral nor immoral, but the desire to live for service and love is the highest morality and the only true altruism.

I will not follow the subject into those fields of human life and spiritual experience where the assurances of immortality mount into clear vision, my aim having been to lessen the weight of the physical world as it hangs upon us in our upward flight. We cannot cut the bond that binds us to the world by pious assertion, nor cast it off by ecstatic struggles of the spirit, nor unbind it by any half-way processes of logic, nor by turning our back upon ascertained knowledge. We must have a clear path behind us if we would have a possible one before us.

There are three chief realities, no one of which can be left out in attempts to solve the problem of destiny: man, the world, and God. We must think of them in an orderly and consistent way. One reality cannot destroy nor lessen the force of another. If there has been apparent conflict in the past, it now seems to be drawing to a close; the world agrees with theism, and matter no longer denies spirit. If at one time, matter threatened to possess the universe and include it under its laws, it has withdrawn its

claim, and even finds itself driven to mind and to spirit as the larger factors of its own problems. Mind now has full liberty to think consistently of itself and of God, and, with such liberty, it finds itself driven to the conclusion of immortality by every consideration of its nature and by every fact of its condition, — its only refuge against hopeless mental confusion.

Not from consciousness only, — knowing ourselves to be what we are, — but out of the mystery of ourselves, may we draw this sublime hope; for we are correlated not only to the known, but to the unknown. The spirit transcends the visible, and by dream, by vision, by inextinguishable desire, by the unceasing cry of the conscious creature for the Creator, by the aspiration after perfection, by the pressure of evil and by the weight of sorrow, penetrates the realms beyond, knowing there must be meaning and purpose and end for the mystery that it is.

MAN THE FINAL FORM IN CREATION.

"The death and the resurrection of the Christ are always to be connected with the ascension. This is the witness that no limits of time or space can separate the Christ from the world which he has redeemed. It is the witness that the heavens are opened, and that their life becomes henceforth one with the life of earth. It becomes an incentive to duty in a life of faith and hope. It is the evidence of a pure and redeemed and glorified humanity. It fulfills the transfiguration in the eternal glory of the Son of man." — Elisha Mulford, LL. D., *The Republic of God*, p. 257.

"The resurrection of Christ is a revelation of a general law of resurrection, and that law and order of life in the resurrection is in continuity with, and is the fulfillment of, the lower laws and processes of created life up to man." — Rev. Newman Smyth, D. D., *Preface to revised ed. of Old Faiths in New Lights.*

"As physical science has brought us to the conclusion that back of all the phenomena of the natural universe there lies veiled an invisible universe of forces, and that these forces may ultimately be reduced to one pervading force, in which the essential unity of the physical universe consists, and as philosophy has further advanced the rational conjecture that this ultimate all-pervading force is simply will, so the great Teacher holds up before us the spiritual world as a system in the same way pervaded by one life, — a life revealed in him as its highest human manifestation, but meant to be shared by all those who, by faith, become partakers of his nature. When, therefore, we are told that the Word, by whom all things were created, was made flesh and dwelt among us, — in other words, that the eternal reason by which the creation from the beginning has been shaped, in the fullness of time allied itself with human intelligence and with human will, — we are not only told nothing that science contradicts, but we have hinted to us a law of the spiritual world which the laws of the natural world confirm, and with which all the last conclusions of science stand up in striking and convincing parallel." — Prof. J. Lewis Diman, D. D., *Orations and Essays*, p. 409.

MAN THE FINAL FORM IN CREATION.

The earth beareth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear. — St. Mark iv. 28.

Our Lord nowhere defines the kingdom of Heaven, but many times over tells us what it is like. A great teacher does not indulge in definitions; for a definition by its nature implies logical processes and conclusions that shut one up within one's own mind, subject to its weaknesses and limitations. Christ puts himself in contrast with the dogmatist who frames a definition that necessarily imprisons him, by opening a universe — undefinable, but clearly apprehended. Search it thoughout, he says, and you will find that all things are in harmony, one truth in all truths. The dogmatist proves a point, Christ reveals the universe of truth; one drives us to some definite action, the other inspires us with a sense of duty; one binds us, the other leaves us in freedom. A great truth can be conveyed only by a great illustration; but Christ's method went farther and connected the truth with the process and fact he uses: the same force, the same order, the same movement, are in the illustration and in the truth illustrated; and one sets forth the other because they have such a

relation. The kingdom of Heaven is like growing corn, not because the Oriental fancy discerns an external likeness, but because the same power lies behind the springing corn and the unfolding kingdom inducing their likeness; they correspond, because both are ordained by one mind and put into one order.

Christ likened the kingdom of Heaven to two fields of action, — growth in the organic world, and the spontaneous action of the human heart in the natural and every-day relations of life. It is like seed sown, like growing corn, like working leaven, like mustard-seed and a fig-tree, like wheat and tares, and fermenting wine. It is like the play of the mind when men lose sheep or money or sons, when they are intrusted with money, when they go to feasts and weddings, when they pray, when they catch fish, and barter, and mend garments, and build houses. The world of unfolding nature and the world of human life, — here are set down the laws, the methods, and the outcome of this great order named the Kingdom of Heaven. Understand one and you will know the other. The likeness is not rhetorical but essential; the revelation of one is through the other, and they match each other because both rest on one Will that works in harmony with itself.

It would be pressing language too far to seek in the phrase, "the earth beareth fruit of herself," a reference to any scientific theory; still there is a recognition of the fact that there is lodged in the world of nature a force that works, as it were, of itself, and so brings forth fruit. It does not assert, but

it admits of, an evolutionary process in the organic world.

The theory of evolution in some form is now so widely accepted that it no longer stirs offense nor awakens suspicion to name it in connection with questions of theology. One may do so without thereby committing one's self to any special theory of evolution, or to any conclusion that may be drawn from it. It may be well, whether it is accepted or rejected, to lay it beside the problems of religion in a tentative way, in order to see if it will aid in solving them, or add to their force and clearness. A multitude of inquiring and not wholly believing minds are thinking upon the themes of evolution, who are eager to discover if they can retain both their faith and their science. The practical divorce between this popular theory and theology, that is often insisted on, reacts against faith, for we are so closely bound to this world that its apparent verdicts take precedence of those of the spiritual world. They may be specially blessed who believe without seeing, but others are not to be condemned who ask to lay their finger upon the proof that life is stronger than death. There is a great deal of incipient infidelity that might be cured if it were properly dealt with. The limitations that make theology an isolated science, and the common assertion that religion and science have nothing to do with each other, are the actual sources of this infidelity. We know ourselves too well to assent to the claim that we are compartment-beings, thought-tight, and can shut religion up in one part, and philosophy in

another, and science in still another. When a truth enters into man it has the range of his whole nature, and makes its appeal to every faculty; if shut within the heart it will mount to the brain, or if held there it will steal down to the heart. Man is the completest unit in nature. The divisions set up between mind and will and sensibility are like the great circles which astronomy puts into the heavens, — imaginary, and for convenience only; if insisted on as real, they might check the planets in their orbits.

No harm, at least, can come from a hypothetical discussion of evolution in its relations to religion, and it is possible that much good will be gained. It is certainly well for all to have some general knowledge of it and to trace its varying stages in the world of thought, if for no other reason than to find out what is settled and what is still undetermined.

While evolution is now so generally accepted that no one thinks in any department of study except under the evolutionary idea, there is as yet no accurate definition and no special theory of it which is not open to criticism. It is immediately urged: How can there be a consensus of belief in evolution without some settled theory of it? What is the foundation of your belief? If it consists of facts, cannot these facts be formulated? These are forceful questions and can be strongly pressed, but may be met by an appeal to the actual attitude of the thinking world, — holding to evolution without a definite theory of it beyond its bare principle and general method. This is not without precedent. The Copernican system was believed by all the men

of science contemporary with its framer long before he stated it; and the system waited for centuries, and waits still, for full statement. Gravitation was held under an imperfect formula before Newton discovered the correct one, and was held as local before it was known to be universal; nor do we yet know much about it. Nearly every great truth precedes its theory; it is believed before it is formulated. Christianity itself was a fact and a power in the world before it became a system; nor have we yet, nor shall we ever have, a definition of it. There is reason to think it will be the same with evolution. It is certainly true to-day that there is no closely defined theory of evolution that covers its facts. Universal laws are asserted, but they are found to be particular and limited in their field. Evolution and Darwinism have been used as interchangeable terms and are still popularly so used; but the men of science to-day regard Darwin as a great student of evolution who discovered the law of natural selection to which his followers gave a wider scope than was claimed for it by himself. Natural selection, though a law of wide reach, does not cover the facts of evolution.

Roughly defined, evolution is the theory that life in the organic world is developed or evolved from preceding life by descent and variation. So far, there is nearly universal agreement because the fact is so evident. But when we ask why, or by what law, offspring is like parents, we get various answers, and none are satisfactory; and when we ask why offspring varies from parents, we get still more di-

vergent answers that are even less satisfactory. Some theories explain variation by natural selection; others by migration; others by an "internal tendency," which is quite probable, but it is a mere phrase and explains nothing; others still by "extraordinary births" which become the progenitors of new species, — true in part doubtless, but how far true is not known, and, whether partial or universal, it is no explanation of the fact. Another, and just now popular, theory of variation is that it is caused by the active efforts of animals in certain directions; but it is questioned if tendencies so caused are sufficiently persistent to form a permanent species.

These are examples of attempts to explain a fact upon which all are agreed, but are wide apart in their explanations. They touch each other at certain points and run into each other at other points, and all rest on certain well-attested phenomena; but no one covers, nor do all, taken in their points of agreement, cover the facts, nor do they get beyond a certain limit where observation ends, — reaching a dead-wall behind which their great fact lies in unattainable mystery. This condition of the subject is of great significance. It does not indicate an imperfect state of science. Lamarck was perhaps as near right as any man since; and science has chiefly provided old theories with a few more facts: the microscope has only added to the vision of the eye. It rather indicates two things: first, that life is a very complex thing, and is too wide to be brought under a theory, — that while innumerable things may be asserted of it, it cannot be put into a single category;

second, that an explanation of life must be sought in a region that technical science does not recognize. A point of immense significance, I repeat, because the theories break down one after another at just those points where they most threaten morals and religion, leaving the great fact of evolution to be explained, if explained at all, by theories that admit of morals and religion. The men of science demur, and say, "Give us time and we will unravel the tangled thread of creation." We do not cast at science its disagreements, nor remind it that so far it has worked at cross purposes, for we well know that such confusion is no sign of error; science seldom starts on the right path, but it often reaches its end, or some better end than it aimed at. Instead, we assert that science will fail in its quest because it always brings up against ultimate facts in both the material and physical worlds. When it is found that some countless millions of vibrations of luminiferous ether upon the retina of the eye give the color red, we have reached an ultimate fact; go one step farther and you are in a world that physical science does not recognize; namely, the consciousness of vision. So when we say, I think, I will, I remember, we assert actual processes that physical science cannot measure: the effort to do so is an attempt to get outside of mind to find mind; it is going outside of the ship to discover where it is bearing you. These ultimate facts form barriers that physical science cannot pass. It may crowd them back and make ever-widening fields for itself, but they remain; they exist in every grain of sand, in every

begotten and conceived thing, in every acting intelligence. There cannot therefore be any theory of creation that is scientific, in the ordinary sense of the word. Science covers only a section of creation. It begins with a homogeneous fluid disturbed by force, but what the force is, and why it begins to act, it does not undertake to determine; it simply strikes in at a given point upon an existing order. What is back of this, what may be over it and under it and in it, science does not recognize, but cannot deny. Now here are great realities, orders, forces already existing and at work when science begins its examination. They exist and act still, and are the materials with which science works; they are the ocean out of which science has filled the cup over which it is busy; but no measurement or analysis of the contents of the cup will explain the ocean. It is in this, so to speak, preëxisting world, this *supra et sub et intra* existing world, that theology and philosophy have their fields, which are not only outside of the physical world but inclusive of it. Physical science can no more settle a question of morals than it can settle the question of creation. It adduces many illuminating facts in respect to both, but it brings up against the same barriers in either case, giving us methods and processes but never causes and explanations. Hence it can determine no question in morals or religion or philosophy, simply because they reach beyond its domain while they have a considerable play within it.

But the theistic evolutionist refuses to think within this domain, and holds that it is unscientific

and empirical to start in at a given point and then attempt an explanation of creation and morals. He boldly enters the wider domain of ultimate cause and original force, and there attempts to think. He can, at least, offer explanations that cannot be disproved, and more and more seems he to be marshaling the forces the way they are going. Postulate a creative Power, an eternal Will, a moral Being, and you can have a coherent system, which is certainly better than a scientific theory that cannot carry the facts.

The point at which I am aiming is this: as natural science starts in at a given point and abandons all that is before it to the theist, so a point will be reached where science fails and must leave the problems of existence to be solved by the theist. As science cannot determine origin, so it cannot determine destiny; as it presents a sectional view of creation, so it gives only a sectional view of everything in creation. It is not only a sectional view in time but in scope and reach. Everything rises out of its domain, and disappears from its view in that larger world which is about it; a crystal and a man are equally inexplicable within its necessarily limited vision.

Such reflections leave with us the clear conviction that physical science cannot settle the problems of religion, though it may furnish important factors in their solution. It can trace a few of the external features of their history for a limited time, the most important of which is that man is included in the evolutionary process so far as the limited vision of

science can observe him. But as this covers his entire visible history, the question arises, What will be his future history? If he has been evolved in his physical nature from the lower orders, may he not develop into a higher order, and so become a simple factor of an ascending series — as much below what is to be as he is now above what has been? More briefly: granting evolution, may not man develop, by the law of descent and variation, into a superior species of being?

The question is worthy of discussion, because evolutionary conceptions prevail so generally that it is wise to discuss man under them, and a question so legitimate as this must be met; and also because it leads to a lofty conception of man, and throws possible light upon certain great Christian facts.

I shall attempt to suggest a few reasons tending to show that man has reached the end of his physical evolution, and will not develop into another and higher species.

Evolution does not imply that any given evolutionary process has no limits or end.

Evolution may be a general law or method, but it does not follow that each thing or species evolved will forever go on developing into higher forms. It is quite as probable that evolution is working towards a fixed end as towards a forever ascending end; it begins in time and space, and because it so begins it may so end. If we find a tendency to develop, we find also a tendency to cease developing. There is a strife and effort to produce a species, but, having produced it, there is a disposition to rest and go no

farther, and it is only by great struggle that nature is crowded on to the production of another species out of existing ones. Hence the apparent permanence of species ; there is undoubtedly a tendency to such permanence, and there is much reason to believe that it will be reached. Creation presents itself in that aspect — species produced and obstinately remaining such ; and the only reason we believe that one species has been evolved from another is because the facts require such belief as we study the past. We do not now behold the evolutionary process going on except in embryology, where the whole story of creation is perpetually repeated ; and in artificial experiments with certain animals, which are not wholly satisfactory, as they show a tendency to sterility and reversion. Evidently the end of a process has been reached, or nearly reached. The struggle for existence and natural selection go on, and environment changes, but plant and tree and animal remain the same, and wear an aspect of finality. Nature has done what she strove to do, namely, evolved species, and, having gained her end, ceases from effort in that direction. The oak and the maple intertwine their boughs for a thousand years, but do not modify each other. The rose and the poppy blossom in the same garden for countless generations, but the rose distills no sleep and the poppy does not rob the rose of its perfume.

We not only have the fact of permanence of species before us, but it is explicable if we can be content to regard evolution as a simple process, and decline to grant unlimited sweep to the laws of natural selec-

tion and variation. It is neither good logic nor good science to assert that the observed processes of evolution are equal to evolution. Logic and science indicate that evolution is the working out of a definite design with reference to a definite end; the laws themselves are the merest slaves of the design. This design and end is the production of species. When these are produced, the laws either cease to act, or show a tendency to cease, — if not wholly in the lower species, an ever-increasing tendency to do so in the higher, — thus indicating that an end of physical variation will be reached.

For the sake of entire clearness, let me say again that science itself does not require us to assign unlimited and endless sweep to the laws of struggle for existence, natural selection, and variation; they work towards definite ends, then stop and give way to other laws that may be analogous to them in some respects, but in others are the reversal of them. It is equally scientific, and it is far more reasonable because it takes in a larger group of facts, to assert that evolution, having produced man, has done what it was set to do and goes no farther.

The effort of nature seems to have been to produce a *person*, and, having done this, the work of evolving creation ceases and rests from its labors.

What is a person? A being having intellect, feeling, and will, and consciousness of itself as such. The brute world produces individuals but not persons. An individual is one of a class, distinct from it but not to the point of consciousness; a person is not only one of a class, but knows himself as one.

An individual is not free because it is not wholly detached from its species, but a person is wholly detached, and therefore is wholly free; a person only can say *I* and *Thou*. The brutes certainly have mind and feeling and will, but only in a rudimentary and partial way. Suppose a brute of a higher order were capable of self-analysis, it would be obliged to say of itself: "I think, but I have not a full mind; I do nothing reflectively, but because I feel that I must; I love, but I see that I cease to love after a little, nor can I tell why I love; I have will up to a certain point, — I can defend myself and seek food, and I can learn to obey, but I feel myself driven by a power that I do not understand, nor can I resist doing what I am moved to do; I am a part of that which is around me, and I cannot detach myself from it." Man is not obliged to speak of himself in such terms. He can think perfectly, that is, reflectively and up to the verge of his knowledge; if he could see farther and know more facts, he is conscious that he could reflect upon them. He can love perfectly because he can choose to die for what he loves; that is, he can cast the whole of himself into the act of love. He can will perfectly; that is, when he makes a choice he knows that it is a real choice: he knows and weighs the motives on either side. He knows himself as distinct from creation, — drawn out from it and still bound to it by a thousand cords, but still so separate from it that he can say: "I am *I*, and am not *it*."

These full attributes and this full consciousness constitute personality. We need not hesitate to say

that man, ideal man, is a perfect being. He may go on indefinitely towards an enlargement of his powers; he may think more widely, love more intensely, choose more wisely, and grow into an ever-deepening sense of selfhood; but there is no occasion for his changing into another kind of being. His limitations are not indications that he is not already a perfect being. A greater and more complex physical development would not necessarily yield a superior creature. Voltaire points one of his severest gibes at human nature in the fable in which he transfers an inhabitant of the earth to one of the larger planets, and sets him to talking with the people he finds there, — a very discontented lot, who grumble over their limitations: "We have only sixty senses, and cannot be expected to know much;" and so quite put to confusion the earthly visitor, who is forced to confess that he has only five. Voltaire was too eager in his sarcasm to see that knowledge does not depend upon the senses but upon mind. If mind is absolute, five senses may be as good as sixty. Indeed, it is probable that the physical universe is correlated to the five senses; that these inlets are sufficient to let in the whole material creation upon man, provided there is a true mind behind them. With five senses and mind we have already come to the verge of matter, and stand looking off into a world of spirit: what we now want is, not more senses, — more or better eyes and ears and hands, — but a better use of mind. Nay, it seems probable that what we now need for larger knowledge is to drop what senses we have, and go off into that world

of the spirit to the borders of which we have come, and explore it simply as minds, or with spiritual bodies. There is not the slightest reason for believing that a superior physical being would gain a better knowledge of the world than man has or will have.

And so it would seem that nature, having produced a being who is capable of understanding it, who is separate from matter, and is allied to an order above it, will make no more efforts in a physical direction, but will move in the direction of this other order to which man belongs. If there is to be further evolution, it will not be material but spiritual; but there is more reason for expecting growth than evolution, because man is already a perfect creature, — the image of God, as near and like to God as a created being can be.

There is in man no premonition of a development into a higher physical life.

In every antecedent order, we may well suppose there is a sympathetic forecast of, and movement towards, that which is about to come. The embryonic bird must have some sense or limited consciousness of wings and flight. As one species or variety is about to pass into another, there is doubtless some prior hint or yearning or movement towards the functions awaiting development. Nature makes no sudden changes in its order, but always sends forward some announcing herald: the force sets towards its destiny. But in man this does not point in a physical direction. He does not dream of better hands and feet and eyes and ears. Instead, all the

inward movements of his nature are mind-ward, and towards that world of thought in which he can secure all the results which a more highly organized body might possibly give. He does not yearn for swifter feet, but rather for such use of his mind that he can make engines which shall not only outrun all possible feet, but supersede them; nor for stronger hands, but for inventive power to create machines that shall do the work of many hands; nor for better eyes, but for skill to make telescopes and microscopes that shall outreach the power of all possible eyes. The set and bent of our nature is not towards more senses, but towards mental faculties that either supplement or supersede the senses. Indeed, more senses, that is, more avenues into the physical world, would imply that man was to turn his attention backward and downward towards matter, whereas the whole effort of nature has been to get him out of and away from it. His lessons do not now lie there, but in the moral and spiritual world to the borders of which he has come. Were man to develop physically into a superior animal, it might result in binding this finer creature faster in matter; for such a being would either be more perfectly correlated to the world, and so might come into a fatal satisfaction with a transient order; or it would be out of true correlation with the world, and so would despise it. Either result would be fatal: gross contentment with a world wholly mastered, or pessimistic contempt for a world too far removed or too alien to be of service. Man occupies just that relation to the physical world in which he can make the best use of it preparatory

to leaving it behind him. One step short of man, the being cannot extricate itself from matter; one step beyond might throw the being back into matter, either as content with it or as hating it, in which case the world would no longer serve it.

The actual movement and effort of man is not in the direction of physical development, but is towards a moral and spiritual development. The effort of nature points away from the physical world and seems about to overleap it, and to lift its last creation into a world of thought and spirit.

Man will, indeed, perfect his body and make the most of it, but only as a basis for an intellectual and spiritual life. He has already done much in this way, but there is no hint of organic change. There is reason to believe that the modern eye has a better perception of the chromatic scale than the Greek eye. Homer is devoid of color, but a landscape, to the last touch, could be painted from the pages of George Eliot or Charles Craddock. So of music: the Greek ear knew little of it beyond rhythm. "Old Timotheus" might lead a military company, but he could not lift a modern "mortal to the skies." But these improvements of eye and ear are not organic changes, and only carry man over into a spiritual world. It is the thought and feeling in color and sound that we care for; they literally transport us into a world where eye and ear have no function. Hence we infer that the next step for man is not some superior physical form, but an elevation into a true spiritual world. Already he stands on its borders; he enters within it by thought and feeling;

he cares for little else when thought and feeling have once been awakened; he yearns for it with real or unconscious desire. He knows that he issued from that world, that he is the creature of mind and not of matter, of spirit and not of force. Behind this long evolution of struggling nature lies this world of idea and thought and feeling and creating energy, a real world of which this physical world is only the show or semblance, as the statue is only the poor shadow of the sculptor's ideal which is the real thing. Having been brought through the long process of evolving creation, and made a partaker of every stage of it for some inscrutable reason, to the verge of another world, so that it can be said of him that he has a true mind and a true spirit, his next step will be into that world to which he is thus correlated. He already moves in it; he has its freedom; he knows its language; he can pronounce the ineffable Name, and can receive upon his face the rays of the divine glory. He can hear the eternal hymn of creation, and knows that it is keyed to joy and righteousness. He can feel in full measure the throb of that supreme, genetic impulse out of which creation sprang — love. If there is any significance or fitness in the order of things, the next step for man will be into this world of realities, and not into a physical order in which nothing more could be done than has been done for him.

In saying that physical or creative evolution probably ends with man, it is not meant that he is exempt from the methods of evolution. His history may go on under laws analogous to those of physical

evolution, but he himself will be the theatre of them. The law of the struggle for existence and the survival of the fittest may continue, not as a physical process in relation to others, but as a moral process within the circle of his own powers. For man, being the end and head of creation, has in himself the whole history of creation; the entire past in all its forms lives and its processes work in him, but always within the fixed and stable limits of personality. The atoms still whirl in tissue and blood; the gases and fluids of primeval ages are a part of his composition; his bones are built out of the elemental solids; the habits and motives of the animal world linger within him, and show their lineaments in his own; the appetites and passions and tempers of beasts still assert themselves in him, even as we name them, — beastly. Being such, the whole process of evolving nature is repeated in him as a free moral being. He becomes, as it were, the whole creation, and its whole struggle is repeated in him and by him, but in conjunction with other factors and on another stage. Heredity conserves and strives to fix the past, but the moral within him, and the spiritual environment made for him, contend against heredity, and select and nourish that which is best. The animal is kept down and crowded out, giving place to intellectual and moral and spiritual habits and qualities. In this process man himself is a free actor, sinking backward into brute conditions, or rising into the divine life of which he has become conscious. The methods and features are evolutionary, but he himself is the force presiding over

them — resisting or coöperating with him who is over and in all. Hence the process is moral, and embraces the whole circle of moral truths, — sin, repentance, conversion, regeneration, aspiration, and struggle after the highest; for all of these turn on, and have their meaning in, a yielding to the animal nature or a striving after the spiritual nature. Tennyson, whose poems are impregnated with the evolutionary idea, — an idea that corrects and redeems what otherwise would be a pessimistic muse, — puts the truth into the lines of *In Memoriam*, where he ascribes a high destiny to man: —

> "If so he type this work of time
> Within himself, from more to more."

Such thoughts do not invalidate any moral duty, or contradict any Christian doctrine. Instead they provide a rational philosophy for sin, conscience, regeneration, and life in the Spirit. They open a path from lower life to higher, and pave a way between this world and the next. They fortify Christian truths by universal truth, and put underneath their problems the base-line that runs through creation as a basis for expectations that converge in heaven. Man needs the whole world to stand on, and all truth to support him; for so only is he the head of creation, and so only can he find his way out of its lower forms into that higher order from which creation sprang.

Still, such considerations might be considered as mere speculations were it not for the fact that we have them in the form of a reality. Man's nature

and destiny are not only matters of theory but of fact; his history and its stages have been gone through and ultimated in One who was Humanity itself. It is possibly more than a religious fact that Christ lived out the life of man in its highest degree and to its last form on the earth, and that he thus illustrated the movement and destiny of humanity. The presiding feature of that life was his consciousness of another world from which he came and into which he returned. If it was a dream, then all is a dream and all may go. But we have no right to pass by that life and consciousness without testing them to see if they will not fit into and explain this lofty hypothesis of man that we are considering.

The reality and fullness of Christ's human life, and the consciousness of another world, each interpenetrating and swelling the volume of the other, this is the fact that holds the eye of the world and challenges its thought. He lived a perfectly human life, and yet upon the basis of it, and as it were out of its nature, predicated another life. He does not bring immortality into the world as the far-off secret of highest heaven, but he instinctively predicated it because he was perfectly the Son of Man. It was no problem for discussion to him, but simply a natural assertion, — the outcome of his insight and outlook as he turned to the world and measured it, and then into heaven and saw what was there, and then upon himself, and found that he belonged both to this world and to heaven, Son of man and Son of God, each because he was perfectly the other. He saw all things; he pierced to the meaning of the

world; he understood day and night; he comprehended the morning and the evening; he looked into the heart of the rose; he knew the secret of history; he entered into the depths of humanity, and knew life and man; he saw all things and himself in God, and God in all; and out of such vision sprang the spontaneous conviction of eternal life as the key to all and the end of all. Life in another world is what nature and man and God mean, and he was the illustration and realization of it. The destiny of man is thus outlined in the Christ. His resurrection was a real entrance into that world, and is the next stage in the development of humanity. His history between that event and his ascension cannot be understood and measured until it is connected with some theory of man and made a part of it. As mere attestation to previous works and words, it has no weight with thought, and no dignity in a large theology. The facts are too great for such an end; they must have in them the scope and swing of human destiny. What if the natural history of humanity on this world be finished not by evolution into some finer form of physical life, not by death, but by resurrection and ascension! Such would not only be a worthy end of the long, blind upward struggle of creation, but an explanation of it. Towards some high end creation has been pressing with age-long steps and yearning throes. Does the uniform process that has wrought to ever-finer issues till it has produced man, cease on the borders of the grave, when, if at all, it is taken up by forces of which we know nothing, and man is transported across

the bottomless gulf of death by the sheer force of Omnipotence? or is it probable that this process — working ever to finer issues — completes the history of man, and lifts him by resurrection and ascension into his final state, returning him as a perfect creation to the world whence his life was drawn, and to the God in whom all along he has lived and moved and had his being?

Three objections may be suggested: First, that such a view identifies man with nature, and leaves him in its grasp. Whether this is an evil thing or not, depends upon the conception of nature. It is a fact that we are in nature, and there seems to be no way of getting out of it; but under a conception of it as rooted in God, and as mounting ever towards the spiritual, there is no need to be delivered from it; it might be separation from God himself. Nothing is gained for man by disdainful thought of nature; it is the mother of whom we were born, over whom the begetting spirit broods perpetually. Second, it is objected that it represents Christ as the product of nature, and the mere culmination of an evolutionary process. But what if this process be met by one in the heavens, so that the phrase, Son of Man and Son of God, becomes one that takes in perfect man and real God, — the revelation of the mystery of eternity? Give full and equal sweep and reverence to each, and no violence will be done to faith and revelation: rather are they thus fulfilled. Third, it is said that if such a destiny awaits humanity, no room is left for the full play of character, and for its final destiny as turning on morals.

To this it may be said that, while the line of destiny for humanity runs in the direction named, it is complicated by the great fact of freedom which may modify its action in the case of individuals. The eternal march is in this direction: woe be to him who falls out of its line!

Theology must not disdainfully separate itself from science while it refuses to be measured by it. It must come into harmony with nature, if it would be true to itself. It is not apart from nature, nor is it parallel with it, nor is it superinduced upon it; it is rather the projection or extension of nature into the world of the spirit, — that left behind which cannot be carried forward, that added which could not earlier be included, but nature still in its essential meaning and purpose, and in that larger sense in which nature is the revelation of God in all his works.

There has been a fatal tendency in the past to make theology a thing by itself, — a play of divine forces in the air or above it, or a by-play to the drama of creation. It has already come somewhat nearer the world, but it must come nearer still, and cast itself into the stream of human life, where, if it is true to itself, it will not be submerged and lost, but instead will ride on the waves, point out the direction they are moving, and preside over the destiny of every child of humanity borne on the mysterious tide that sets towards eternity.

MUSIC AS REVELATION.

"All inmost things, we may say, are melodious; naturally utter themselves in song. The meaning of song goes deep. See deep enough, and you see musically; the heart of nature being everywhere music, if you can only reach it." — CARLYLE.

"God is its author, and not man: he laid
The key-note of all harmonies; he planned
All perfect combinations; and he made
Us so that we could hear and understand."

"It is the function of art to see and to portray the invisible, the ideal, in its true relation to the laws of the universe and of the kingdom of God; to implete the massive chord-structures and the tender melodies with a deeper sentiment or a grander, one more tender or more triumphant, than the heart could otherwise express or receive." — PROF. B. C. BLODGETT, Mus. Doc., *The Mission of Music to Mind and Heart.*

"Theology and music unite and move on, hand in hand, through time, and will continue eternally to illustrate, embellish, enforce, impress, and fix in the attentive mind the grand and important truths of Christianity." — ANDREW LAW, *Essay on Music.*

"The creation that now groans will some time sing."
PROF. J. F. WIER (*in colloquio*).

"There is something sacramental in perfect metre and rhythm. They are outward and visible signs of an inward and spiritual grace, namely, of the self-possessed and victorious temper of one who has so far subdued nature as to be able to hear that universal sphere-music of hers, speaking of which Mr. Carlyle says that 'all deepest thoughts instinctively vent themselves in song.'" — CHARLES KINGSLEY.

"There is music in heaven because there is no self-will. Music goes on certain laws and rules. Man did not make the laws of music: he has only found them out, and, if he be self-willed and break them, there is an end of music instantly; all he brings out is discord and ugly sounds. Music is fit for heaven. Music is a pattern and type of heaven, and of the everlasting life of God which perfect spirits live in heaven; a life of melody and order in themselves; a life in harmony with each other and with God." — CHARLES KINGSLEY.

MUSIC AS REVELATION.

Praise the Lord from the earth,
Ye dragons and all deeps:
Fire and hail, snow and vapor;
Stormy wind, fulfilling his word:
Mountains and all hills;
Fruitful trees and all cedars.

PSALM cxlviii.

And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvelous are thy works, O Lord God, the Almighty; righteous and true are thy ways, thou King of the ages. — REVELATION xv. 3.

IF so simple yet absurdly general a question were raised as this, — What is the use or object of creation? an equally simple and general answer might be returned, namely, that it is the path by which God gets to man, and also the path by which man gets to God: that is, creation is the medium of the revelation of God. By calling it a path we somewhat define it, for it thus implies a distance that is overcome and an end that is reached. God may be regarded as starting towards man at the beginning of creation, and drawing steadily nearer until he reaches man, when — being present and now fully revealed — he no longer requires the path, but may be known directly. So man may use creation — its

laws, processes, forms — as a path to God along which he climbs till he reaches God whom he thus comes to know directly. When God and man have thus gone over this common path, there is, in a certain sense, no further need of it, for each has reached the other. We use creation aright when we use it as a path between God and man. It has of itself no end or use, and so doubtless will pass away, or be left behind like a cloud of dust that rises from the wheels of the traveler. Creation is the true Jacob's ladder on which the angels of heaven and the angels of humanity pass and repass — itself a dream but the basis of an eternal reality.

Creation is interpreted to us by the five senses, all of which act by some kind of impression and form the one bridge between ourselves and the world of matter — one bridge of sensation but dividing, as it were, at the end where it touches man, and becoming sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch. If man were considered as made up of mind and heart and an animal nature, sight might be regarded as revealing creation to his mind, hearing to his heart, smell and taste and touch to his animal nature. The distinction is only apparent and is vaguely general, for as the five senses are but one sense of touch, so man is a being who cannot be divided into parts; man is one. But the distinctions are practically valuable, and are necessary to a classification of knowledge. By the eye we discover an immeasurable universe filled with thoughts, or laws and processes which are based on thoughts — chiefly mathematical; for whatever else the universe may be

and may express, it is mathematical, and mathematics, as all will confess, reach only the intellectual side of us. It is true that we can *feel* by seeing, but if creation were revealed to us only through the eye, we should know far more than we should feel. So another organ is provided that shall bring creation to us as emotional beings — the ear conveying sound. It is true that the eye can feed the heart, and the ear can minister to the mind; they play into each other; still, the distinction is real. Hence, if using the eye we look at creation and find mathematical laws in gravitation and crystallization, and so infer, as we must, that there is a mind behind the laws which speaks to our minds through them, so using the ear and hearing sounds that touch our hearts, we must infer that there is a heart behind the laws of sound which seeks to reveal itself to us through them. We cannot escape this conclusion. For as the mind can get out of creation no more mathematical relations than were put into it, so the heart cannot get from sounds more emotion than was originally lodged in the laws that produce sounds; the effect never exceeds the cause. If the laws of nature seen by the eye reveal an infinite thought or thinker, so these laws heard by the ear and acting on the heart reveal an infinite heart that ordained them. But the laws of sound rest as fully on mathematics as do the laws of gravitation and crystallization, and so point to the same source — eye and ear, mind and heart, resting on One who is both mind and heart. There are theories which conceive of the source of creation as only thought, be-

cause they find everywhere thought-relations; other theories which claim that it is force because they find a universal and indestructible energy; but it would be as logical to claim that this original source is feeling or emotion, for there is as much in the universe to awaken emotion as there is to indicate thought or energy. Indeed, as we only come to full consciousness of ourselves in emotions — emotion or feeling being the highest exercise of our nature — so far as we can reason from our nature to its origin, it indicates that we spring from a source of feeling, or an infinite Heart. Hence the highest wisdom has declared that God is Love and that the worlds were made by the Son of God — the eternally begotten manifestation of Love; and the severest science cannot logically assert the contrary.

Leaving the field of metaphysics, let us enter the world of sound that lies about us and see how vast it is — how filled with emotions — how thoroughly attuned it already is to the heart of man — a very voice of God which, if it could utter all its notes at once, would give forth an infinite and eternal harmony.

There is lodged in all substances, so far as we know, a capacity for sound. There is none so coarse and unyielding, except perhaps some clays, but has its note, which may be brought out under conditions either of concussion or tension. Strike any solid thing, and in addition to the noise caused by the vibrating air you will hear a certain note or key that belongs to the thing itself; or stretch any tensible thing and it will give out a note peculiar to itself when it is sufficiently touched.

We do not hear gases when they are gently moved, nor a bubble when it bursts, but only because our ears are dull to their fineness. The pipes in the organ have had no capacity given them, but simply yield up what their original substances contained. Once they were solid woods, gross tin or lead hidden in the heart of the earth, but even there they had this capacity for sound, and their note and quality, as they had color and chemical affinity. Man has only developed what was within them. By arranging their shape and size and passing a current of air through them, we obtain a sound which the ear pronounces a musical note. Thus we speak of a brassy sound — referring it not to a law of vibration nor to the shape of the instrument, but to its substance. Not only a certain kind of wood is required by the violinist, but only a certain quality of that wood will give him the quality of sound he desires. Some substances give forth their notes without rearrangement, by simple concussion, or friction, or tension. Water falling from various heights, and reeds of different lengths swept by the wind, and branches of trees bending under the storm utter their notes, sometimes forming almost harmony. And so we may consider the earth as a vast harp strung with innumerable strings, silent but full of tuneful sounds, and needing only the skill of man to bring them out. This universal capacity for sound or tone is not a bare and unrelated thing, but is connected with a law of music which has its seat first in the air and then in the mind of man. We find in the air the musical scale or octave consisting of eight notes formed

by quicker or slower vibrations and so having a mathematical basis. All we can say of this law is that it is a law — why and how we cannot tell. Corresponding to this law of the air is a law of hearing, so that the musical sense with which we are endowed accords with the musical law of vibration. Thus the scale or octave has two apparent sources or foundations — one in the air, the other in man ; the octave does not more truly exist in one than in the other. We speak vaguely if we say that man has a capacity for hearing the octave in the air ; the law of the octave, with its mathematical exactness, is wrought into his nature as thoroughly as it is wrought into the external world. The wonderful thing here is not the adaptation of nature to man, but the absolute identity of the law in nature and the law in man ; for if we only silently think the octave, we think it as under the same mathematical law as when we hear it in actual vibration. We behold here a manifestation of God that goes far beyond that of a skillful designer — forcing on us the thought that God is in the laws themselves. And so, at once, we leap to the grand conclusion that it is because God is so immersed, as it were, in these laws that we can use them for his praise beyond any others revealed to us.

The subject is full of suggestion at this point. Most impressive is the teleological aspect of it. Begin as far back in creation as you will, — in the geologic ages when there was no ear to hear, — and you find this capacity for sound in all material things — no harmony, no music as yet, but only a note ready to be brought out, and in the forming air

a law of vibration ready to turn the notes into harmony, and finally the ear of man ready to catch the harmonies that his skill evokes, and behind the ear the soul ready to praise God in the sounds and harmonies so prepared from the beginning. Here is an orderly sequence of steps and adaptations mounting continually higher — proceeding from God and at last ending in God in the accorded praise of his own conscious image. In a loftier sense than they were written, we may use the words of Dryden : —

> " The trembling notes ascend the sky,
> And heavenly joys inspire.
> The song began from Jove,
> Who left his blissful seats above
> (Such is the power of mighty love).
> . . . . . .
> So love was crowned, but music won the cause."

We do not find in nature what may properly be called music, but only its materials and its laws. Man only can create music, for nothing is perfect until, in some way, it touches or passes through man. He is the end and object of creation, and its processes are full and have meaning only when they are completed in him. Everything in nature is a puzzle until it finds its solution in man, who solves it by connecting it in some way with God and so completes the circle of creation. Like everything else in nature, music is a *becoming*, and it becomes its full self when its sounds and laws are used by intelligent man for the production of harmony, and so made the vehicle of emotion and thought. But sound even before it becomes music may be the occasion of emotion though not of complex or intelligent

emotions. It is the peculiarity of the sounds of nature that they awaken but a single emotion; each thing has its note and some one corresponding feeling. Enter at evening a grove of pines and listen to the wind sighing through the branches; the term by which we spontaneously describe it indicates the one feeling of pensive melancholy it awakens, but an orchestra could not render it more effectively. It lacks, however, the quality of intelligence, because it is not combined with other sounds for some end. The song "What are the wild waves saying?" raises a question hard to answer. It is not a hymn to the great Creator until it has passed through the adoring and reflecting mind of man. But even if there is no music in nature — not even in the notes of birds, as the men of science tell us, for the birds but whistle — there are the materials of music, all furnished with their notes set to corresponding emotions. The gamut is broader than has been compassed. Beyond the reach of the ear of man is a universe of sound — vibrations slower and deeper than those of Niagara, quicker and finer than those of the mosquito's wing, and each is dowered with power to awaken some emotion that now we do not feel because we do not hear the sound. The materialists are much concerned about the possibility of an environment in case of a future life. Where and of what? — they ask. Well, here is an environment of possible emotion transcending present knowledge, and so perhaps awaiting minds to feel it. It is difficult to believe that God has put himself into creation in the form of emotional sounds and no ear be made to hear

them. If a part of creation comes to a realized use in man, why not the whole? If creation is the path between God and man by which they come to each other, must not man journey along the whole of it, even as God has?

But if there is no music in nature, there is a prophecy and some hint and even faint articulation of it. In a favoring spot an echo often starts another echo, but an octave above, and in rare places still answering echoes not only on the same key but always in harmony, softer and sweeter. This is almost music, and seems a call to man to liberate it from the prison of matter and suffer it to become the harmony it is striving to express — reminding one of that striking passage of Goethe's child correspondent: "When I stand all alone at night in open nature, I feel as though it were a spirit and begged redemption of me. Often have I had the sensation, as if nature, in wailing sadness, entreated something of me, so that not to understand what she longed cut through my very heart." The child uttered the deepest philosophy and touched the very secret of creation — even this, that God is not above creation as a mechanician, but is in it by indwelling presence, one with its laws, himself the secret energy of its processes, and the soul of the sentiments and thoughts lodged within it, and so coming to man for recognition. There is no fuller revelation of God in nature than is found in these laws of sound by which he comes into the very heart of man, even to its inmost recesses of love and adoration; and it requires only a sensitive, child-like heart to interpret

this speechless music locked within nature as the voice of God pleading to be let out into music and praise through the heart of man, for so only can his works praise him.

I turn abruptly from this world of sound as a revelation of God, to music as a revelation or prophecy of the future. I do not say the future world nor the future of humanity in this world, as I mean both and regard them as one. There is a future of this world in a historical sense, and there is a future world that is above history; if death is all that divides them, and if death is abolished, they become one. Hence, while the distinction in some ways is to be retained, in moral ways the two worlds are to be regarded as one. Regenerated humanity and heaven are interchangeable terms; they are alike, and one simply passes on and up into the other. It is a central conception of Christianity that death is but an incident in the external history of man. Hence Christ sweeps it out of his path almost as with the scorn of indifference. Hence also in the Apocalypse, with this principle to guide us, we read of heaven and find it refers to this world; the new Jerusalem comes down from God out of heaven, and the tabernacle of God is with men. Is it here or there? We need not answer except to say that it is both, but under a conception of eternity and not of time. This inseparable blending of moral perfection and heavenly existence, so confusing to ordinary thought, is itself a revelation not to be passed by, and one under which we should teach ourselves to think and act. In its struggle with thought and lan-

guage to unfold the way to future perfection, the universe itself is taxed for forms of expression. The sun and moon, the stars, the sea, thunders and lightnings, the four winds, the rocks, mountains, and islands, fire and earthquake, hail and smoke, trees and green grass, horses and lions and locusts and scorpions, the clouds and the rainbow, dragons and floods, eagles and nameless beasts, the serpent and the lamb, the forces of nature in their mightiest exhibition, the travail of birth, the cities and the nations, all angels and men, temples and altars, kings and queens and wine of wrath, bottomless pits and fiery lakes, death and mourning and famine, merchants with their merchandise of gold and the souls of men — such are the materials of which the drama of human society is composed as it moves on towards perfection. But as the end draws nigh, this tumultuous scenery of the elements and of lower nature passes away, and another order of imagery appears. Now we behold a city lying foursquare, open on all sides, paved with gold, watered by a river of life and fed by a tree of life and lighted by the glory of God. But underneath the whole mighty process of advancing righteousness and continuous judgment is heard the note of praise — harpers harping with their harps — and, at the end, the song of Moses and of the Lamb — the song of deliverance and victory. The underlying or central image of the Apoclypse is song, the voice of harpers mingling with the voice of great thunders and of many waters and of a great multitude, heard throughout and heard at last in the universal ascription: "Hallelujah: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth."

If we take this central image and ask why it is used to describe heaven or the future of regenerated humanity, the answer would be, because of its fitness. If this final condition were defined in bare words, it would be as follows: Obedience, Sympathy, Feeling or Emotion, and Adoration. These, in a sense, constitute heaven, or the state of regenerated humanity. By the consent of all ages, heaven has been represented under a conception of music, and will be in all ages to come. It is subjected to many sneers, but the sneer is very shallow. The human mind must have some form under which it can think of its destiny. It is not content to leave it in vagueness. It is a real world we are in, and we are real men and women in it. We dwell in mystery and within limitations, but over and above the mystery and the limitation is an indestructible sense of reality. I am and I know that I am. Standing on this solid rock, I find reality about me, nor can I be persuaded that other beings and things are dreams or shadows. It is in my nature to believe in reality, and so I demand definite conceptions, nor can I rest in vagueness or be content with formless visions and their abstractions. Thus the human mind has always worked and thus it always will work, leaving behind it the logicians and plodders in science, in the free exercise of the logic of human nature. I do not absolutely know what sort of a world this will be when it is regenerated, but I must have some conception of it. I do not absolutely know what heaven is like — it will be like only to itself — but if I think of it at all, I must do so under some present definite

conception. The highest forms under which we can now think are art-forms — the proportion of statuary and architecture, the color of painting, and music. The former are limited and address a mere sense of beauty, but music addresses the heart and has its vocation amongst the feelings and covers their whole range. Hence music has been chosen to hold and express our conception of moral perfection. Nor is it an arbitrary choice, but is made for the reasons that music is the utterance of the heart, it is an expression of morality, and it is an infinite language. Before the sneer at heaven as a place of endless song can prevail, it must undo all this stout logic of the human heart. We so represent it because when we frame our conception of heaven or moral perfection, we find certain things, and when we look into the nature and operation of music we find the same things, namely: Obedience, Sympathy, Emotion, Adoration. Of this relation we will now speak.

1. Obedience. The idea that is fastest gaining ground in all departments of thought, is that of the reign of law — law always and everywhere and nothing without its range. It does not antagonize a personal God, but requires it; for law is not an abstraction, nor a mere force, but a thing of intelligence and feeling and purpose, and so must be grounded in a being having these characteristics. We cannot say that God is above or under law, nor that he makes laws, nor that he obeys laws. He is himself the laws, which are but ways of his acting. This idea does not antagonize liberty, for there is a law of liberty. A free-acting agent is free only because he

obeys the law of his own will and obeys it intelligently. He has power to disobey a law but he cannot really break it — it is law still. Nor does the reign of law antagonize grace, for grace has laws as imperative as that of gravitation. Nor does law contradict miracle. The reign of law went on when Christ multiplied the loaves and raised Lazarus from the dead; he simply disclosed laws to which we are unaccustomed, but which may come to view in farther stages of human progress or in another stage of existence. We do all things through laws, and life itself, down and up to its widest complexity, is the product of law, so that the exact and absolute correlative of life is obedience. As human life goes on towards perfection and mounts into higher stages here and hereafter, it is simply gaining in obedience. The will grows freer, all the faculties act more spontaneously, the parts of our nature grow more coördinate and tend to reinforce each other, until, like some well-made engine, the whole fabric of our nature works in swift, silent, and frictionless activity; but it is still the action of obedience, and the perfection of the life is but the perfection of the obedience. The New Jerusalem descends out of heaven as the world rises into the obedient order of heaven. But under what art-form shall we express this? for expression we must have. It must be an art that is itself full of obedience and covers, so to speak, its history, and discloses its results. Sculpture and painting have their laws which they must rigidly obey, but they address chiefly the sense of form and proportion and color, and end chiefly in a sense of

mere beauty or fitness; they are largely intellectual and yield their results chiefly in the intellect. But music goes further. While its laws are as exact and fine as those of form and color and even more recondite, any breaking of them begets a deeper sense of disobedience. When we see a distorted form or ill-matched colors, the eye is offended, but there is no such protest as that of the ear when it is assailed by discord. False proportion and crudely joined colors provoke mental indignation, but hardly more; the borders of feeling are reached but not deeply penetrated. But a discord of sounds lays hold of the nerves and rasps them into positive pain. In fine natures it may even cause extreme physiological disturbance. A statue could not be so ugly nor a painting so ill colored as to produce spasms, but such a result is quite possible through discord. The sensitiveness of musicians is not a matter of sentiment, and is the farthest from affectation, but is a matter of nerves. The protest and the pain are of exactly the same nature as those caused by a fall and concussion. But, reaching the mind along the wounded nerves, it awakens there the same feeling of anger and resentment that we feel when we have been ruthlessly struck. A discord of sounds is unendurable, but we hardly say that of violations of form and color. This shows that we are more finely related to the laws of sound than to those of form and color, and that the relation covers a wider range of our nature; or, in other words, that music is a better type of obedience. When its laws are broken, the history of disobedience

is written out in the protests of our whole being — from quivering nerve to the indignation of the heart.

There is also an exactness in the laws of harmony that makes obedience to them specially fine and so fit to be a type of it. While, as in every art, it can only approximate an ideal — never reaching, perhaps, actual harmony — it is more rigidly under law and comes nearer its ideal than any other. It is able more thoroughly to overcome the grossness of matter and to use it for its own ends than is statuary or painting; nature is more pliant to it. There is a latitude in other arts that admits of defense, but there is none in music. The sculptor may trench on the laws of form for the sake of deepening expression, but the musician seeks higher effects by an increasing adherence to the laws of his art. If he admits a discord it is not as a variation from harmony but as a denial of it, and is used to shock the hearer into a deeper sense of the prevailing concord. Nor is any other art so fine in the distinctions it makes. Nothing can be more exact and more minute than the laws of light by which form is revealed, but the eye is not so keen to mark slight departures from the law of form as is the ear in noting variations in its realm. A highly trained musician can detect a variation from the pitch of $\frac{1}{64}$th of a semitone, but the best mechanical eye could not detect a correspondingly fine variation of a line from the perpendicular, nor could the nicest sense of color perceive a like variation of shade. There is also this peculiar and suggestive difference between the eye and the ear and their action: the eye never tran-

scends the laws of light and form; it always acts within the limits of mathematical laws, and is transcended by them, but the musical ear recognizes laws for which no scientific basis is yet found. In the tuning of any stringed instrument certain requirements of the ear are obeyed for which no reasons can be given: the problem is too subtle even for Helmholtz — suggesting that music is that form of art in which man expresses his transcendence of nature. As man himself reaches beyond the material world and its laws, and goes over into another, even a spiritual world, so music is the art that lends itself to this feature of his nature, going along with it and opening the doors as it mounts into the heavens.

This fine obedience in music is best seen, however, in its execution. When voice joins with voice in the harmony of their contrasted parts, and instruments add their deeper and higher tones, — trumpets and viols and reeds each giving their various sounds — voices as of a great multitude and instruments as of the full orchestra, — and all, binding themselves down to exact law, conspire to the utterance of manifold harmony, we have not only the most perfect illustration of obedience but the joy of obedience; one is immediately transmuted into the other; we are thus let into the soul of obedience and find it to be joy — that its law is a law of life. The pleasure we feel in music springs from the obedience which is in it, and it is full only as the obedience is entire.

Thus we see how this art becomes prophetic. There is a double yet single goal before humanity —

the goal of obedience to the eternal laws and the goal of bliss. The race is long, and slowly are the mile-stones of ages passed, but when the foot of the runner has touched the last bound, his hands also touch either pillar of the goal; he has obeyed and he is blest. But in all the race he has a continual lesson and a constant presage in this divine art of music — its laws glorifying obedience and its joy feeding his tired spirit.

2. Music is, beyond all other arts, the expression and vehicle of sympathy. In the evolution of matter the progress is from simplicity to variety; in the brute world the progress is the same in the form of fierce antagonism which yields the semblance of almost entire selfishness — not selfish because not yet moral. When humanity is reached, this brute inheritance becomes true selfishness because it encounters laws of conscience and welfare that require the contrary. The order of creation is reversed in man. The isolating struggle of self against others ends, and a law of preservation takes its place. The watch-word is no longer destruction but salvation. The line of progress does not run through isolation and antagonism, but through union and sympathy. The aspect of creation before and outside of man shows repellence; in man creation draws together. Before man, destiny lay in a destructive struggle between species; in man the process ends and he achieves his destiny by loving his neighbor. Whatever burdens of brute inheritance and ignorance and voluntary evil linger on, thither the destiny of man tends. The highest action of man's nature is the free play

of sympathy — not agreement of thought nor concurrence of will, but feeling with another. This alone is true unity. If the human race achieves any destiny it will be of this sort; if there be a heaven it will be one of sympathy. The promise and presage of it are not only wrought into our hearts but into the divine art we are considering. No other art, no other mode of impression, equals music in its power to awaken a common feeling. The orator approaches it, but he deals chiefly with convictions, and conviction is a slow and hard path to feeling, while music makes a direct appeal. A patriotic hymn does its work far more surely and quickly than does an argument for the Constitution; and the orator is not effective till he borrows from music something of its rhythm and cadence and purity of tone. The most persuasive orator [1] of the age spoke in as strict accord with the laws of music as a trained singer, and often it was the melody of his voice that "won the cause." Music leaves logic behind in the race towards sympathy and action; if it were not itself noble and true, if it did not hide and lose its power when yoked to a bad cause, it would work great mischief in society. It abets reason, and only discloses its full power and works its mightiest results when used in the service of truth. Hence there is no music in nations and races that are without nobility of thought, and there is no truer test of the quality of a nation than its music. Bach and Haydn and Beethoven would be impossible in a nation that did not produce a Kant, a Schelling,

[1] Wendell Phillips. See *Andover Review*, vol. i. p. 309.

and a Schleiermacher; and the former are as truly exponents of its character as the latter.

The main office of music is to secure sympathy. When a great singer, taking words that are themselves as music, joins them to notes set with a master's skill, and, pouring into perfect tones the passion of a feeling heart, so describes some tragic tale of death, every heart of a thousand hearers beats with a common feeling, and every mind, for the time, runs in the same path of pity and sadness; for the moment there is absolute sympathy. If instead a truth or principle underlie the song, there is also a temporary agreement in thought. The moral and social value of such experiences is great; they lead away from selfishness, and point to that harmony of thought and feeling towards which humanity is struggling.

So too in producing music, its highest effects can be gained only when the performers not only read and utter alike, but feel alike. Hence there is in music a moral law of sympathy as imperative as its mathematical laws. Hence also no one who is centrally selfish ever becomes great either as composer or performer; and often, when everything else is perfect, the defect lies at this very point. "If I could make you suffer for two years," said a teacher to a noted singer, "you would be the best contralto in the world." It follows with sure logic that no one can truly sing God's praises who does not adore God. No training of voice or touch can compass the divine secret of praise. The feeling of praise — not as mere feeling but as solid conviction — must

enter into the utterance or it lacks the one quality of highest effectiveness. It is said that the undevout astronomer is mad, but the undevout musician is an impossibility. If we fail to distinguish between what may be called *fine* and *genuine* rendering, it is because it is not always easy to distinguish between reality and unreality. What is the matter with the music? is a question often asked. The technical rendering may be faultless, and the defect lie in that inmost centre whence are all the issues of life and power. In the nature of things there is the same reason for faith, consecration, devout feeling, and holy living in the choir as in the pulpit, and there is nothing unbecoming in the conduct and feeling of the preacher that is not equally unbecoming, and for the same reasons, in singers of the divine praises. It is not a matter of appropriateness but of effectiveness, not of the fitness of things but of the nature of things, which is always sincere and can yield results only as it is kept true. We are guided in this matter by nature itself. Any musical sound, however produced, immediately seeks to ally itself with other sounds, but it selects only those that are in agreement with it, and passes by all others. Strike a note on any instrument and the sound will start into audible vibration other sounds, but only those harmonious with itself. Thus in the very depths of music there is planted this law of sympathy — like seeking like and joining their harmonious forces. Hence it is that those who feel alike, and are keyed in their nature to the same pitch, turn to music for expression; voices that blend

lead to blended hearts. Love often has this origin and grows through the mingled song of two voices. Households that sing are the most sympathetic and harmonious in all their order. Christian altruism and mutuality find their highest expressions in song and are fostered by it. Upon the whole, men agree in the matter of music better than in anything else. Call a synod of all the churches — orthodox and heterodox, Puritan and Prelatical, Protestant and Catholic — and while they could not put ten words together in which they would agree, they would all unite in singing the *Te Deum*. The Prelatical churches certainly touch a great truth when they sing their creeds, for a creed is in reality for the heart with which we believe unto salvation. Here we come close to the fact that music is a revelation of future perfection. That ultimate condition will be one in which the separating power of evil is ended, and men have attained to the wisdom of love. They are no longer developed by antagonism and isolation but under a law of mutuality. Then each life shares in the power and volume of every other, and the peculiar value and quality of each is wrought into a total of perfect unity. We search in vain for any expression or type of this destiny until we enter the higher fields of music, where it is written out with alphabetic plainness in the eternal characters and laws of nature. The united action of the full chorus and orchestra is a perfect transcript, down to the last and finest particular, of perfected human society. The relation of voices to instruments and of instruments to each other, the variety in harmony, the obedience

to law drawing its power from sympathetic feeling, the inspiration of a noble theme, the conspiring together to enforce a mighty feeling which is also a thought — we thus have an exact symbol of the destiny of humanity. If it is never reached, then indeed prophecy will have failed and love also; then the noblest art we know will have turned into a delusion, a nourisher of sickly dreams, the chiefest vanity of a vain and meaningless world.

3. Music as an expression of *feeling* is a prophecy of that grander exercise of our nature for which we hope.

It is the nature of feeling to express itself. Thought may stay behind silent lips, but when it becomes feeling it runs to expression. So far as we can reason from ourselves, we cannot believe that the universe sprang out of thought. Thought would not have made this mighty expression that we call creation; it is an expression of feeling — some infinite emotion that must find vent or the infinite heart will burst with its suppression. Music is an illustration of this law of our emotions, and is the natural expression of deep feeling. When great crises fall upon nations and oratory fails to give full vent to the heroic purpose of their hearts, some poet links hands with some composer, and so a battle-hymn sweeps the armies on to victory — the fiery clangor of the Marseillaise, or the sad, stately rhythm of the John Brown Hymn. History all along culminates in song. The summits of Jewish history from Miriam to David are vocal with psalms. There is nothing grand in thought, deep in feeling, splen-

did in action, but runs directly to song for expression. When feeling reaches a certain point, it drops the slow processes of thought and speech and mounts the wings of song, and so flies forward to its hope. "O that I had wings as a dove;" the feet are too slow to bear us away from our sorrow to our rest. In the simplest life there is always this tendency of feeling, whether of joy or sadness, to voice itself in melody. When night draws its curtain gloomily around us, and all the weariness of the day and the sadness of past years are gathered into one hour, forcing tears, idle but real, to our eyelids, deepening and swelling into a burden of despair, how naturally we turn to music for utterance and relief! Some gentle strain is sung by tender lips, or perchance some chord of harmony is wafted from the distance, and the sad spell is broken. Goethe makes a chance strain of an Easter hymn defeat the purpose of a suicide — a thought that Chopin has wrought into one of his Nocturnes. As in nature there is a resolution of forces by which heat becomes light, so emotion, of whatever sort, if intrusted to music, turns into joy. What a fact! Here is the world of humanity tossing with emotions — love, sorrow, hope — driving men hither and thither, and here is music ready to take these emotions up into itself where it purifies and sublimates them and gives them back as joy and peace. What alchemy is like this? how heavenly, how divine! If, in the better ages to come, there still be weariness, sorrow, disappointment, delayed hope, may we not expect that this transmutation of them into joy which goes

on here, will continue to act there? We are moving on towards an age and a world of sympathy, and sympathy is the solvent of trouble. If so, there must be some medium or actualized form of sympathy, for there will never come a time when mind can act upon mind without some medium, and the art-idea is probably eternal. In some supernal sense, then, music will be the vocation of humanity when its full redemption is come. The summit of existence is feeling; the summit of character is sympathy, and music is the art-form that links them together.

4. Music is the truest and most nearly adequate expression of the *religious* emotions, and so becomes prophetic of the destiny of man as a religious being. "The soul of the Christian religion," says Goethe, "is reverence." It is also the great, inclusive act or condition of man as he comes into perfection. Goethe adds, with profound suggestions, that it must be taught. The highest conception of the use of creation is as a tuition in reverence. Whatever else it may teach, it teaches this, or, if it fails in this, it teaches nothing. There is no severer condemnation, no surer refutation of the agnostic and mechanical theories of creation than that they rob it of this special function. There can be no reverence for an unknowable cause of creation, nor for a universe whose processes are only mechanical, nor for humanity if it is the automaton of unconscious forces. The whole tendency and operation of physical science at present — if men would but see it — is towards a world not of mere mystery but of wonder, where the only proper feeling is adoration. Materialism is

breaking up and disappearing under the discovery of laws and processes and causes for which it has no explanation, and all things are resolving into mere symbols of will and mind and feeling. Already matter has eluded the touch of our senses, and our recognition of it as a thing in itself is a mere conventionality of speech. The resolution of it into force or motion and of its processes into forms of thought is a drawing out of more than every alternate thread from the veil that hangs between creation and its Source: the veil may never be wholly put aside but it grows continually thinner, letting through revealing rays of truth and glory. When this process gets full recognition — as it surely will — and men become tired of the senseless play of agnostic phrases and catch-words, and philosophy triumphs as it always has triumphed, there will be but one voice issuing from creation — the voice of praise, and but one feeling issuing from the heart of man — the feeling of reverence before the revealed Creator. Then the heart of man will require some form of expression for its mighty and universal conviction. We have already a great oratorio of the Creation, but we shall have a greater still, profounder in its harmonies and more majestic in its ascriptions.

We have in music the art-form that is not only fitted to express our religious feelings, but is wholly fitted for nothing else. I mean that music is creatively designed for religion and not directly for anything else. Like all great arts it has a large pliancy through which it may be adapted to many uses. Music may be made degrading and a minister

of sensuality or trivial pleasure, but never by its own consent nor with a full use of its powers. When music is used to pave the way to vice, certain instruments are rigidly excluded and the nobler tones are exchanged for "soft Lydian airs." This exclusion and perversion every true musician detects as a lack in the music itself, and the spirit of music — like a fettered Sampson — pleads with him for a better use and fuller exercise of its nature. Such use of music is like the look of scorn in the face of beauty; no other face could express the scorn so well, but the beauty is still a protest against its use for such an end; it is made for something better. So music lends itself to almost every human feeling down to the vilest, but always with suppression of its power. It is not until it is used for the expression of that wide range of feeling which we call religious that it discloses its full powers. Then it is on its native heath; it gathers its full orchestra from the organ to the drum, from softest viols and flutes to tinkling cymbals, from instruments that are all passion to instruments of almost passionless dignity; then it covers the whole scale of its vast compass, from one pure note of voice or instrument to its highest possible combinations, from a slumber song to a Hallelujah chorus. It is not a matter of fancy but a fact of science that music never seems to be satisfied with itself except when it is used in a religious way; it is always seeking to escape into this higher form, even as man is himself. We hardly leave scientific ground when we say that music itself is a holy thing, and is always seeking to create holi-

ness by some inherent law. It always strives to destroy and overcome its opposite — not by absolute destruction but by conversion. Strike all the keys of a piano and some strong, righteous notes will gather up the agreeing notes, silence the others, and create a harmony out of the discord. When a rough, loud noise like an explosion is made, the harmonious notes sift out and drop the discordant ones, so that the final vibration in the distance is no longer jarring noise but a soft and pleasing tone. An over-refinement of thought this may seem, but it is no finer than the laws of nature. It is, at least, an illustration of what it does in man, silencing the discord of his tossed life and refining every sentiment and purpose into sweet agreement.

Beethoven put this process into musical form. In one of his symphonies, he opens with four full, strong chords from the entire orchestra; then the separate instruments begin to war upon them, strive to overpower them with the blare of trumpets, to drown them in the complexities of the violins, to silence them under the rattle of the drums; but the primal chords, yielding at times, still hold their own, gather force, reassert themselves, and at last overpower their antagonists by patient persistence and all-conquering sweetness, rise into full possession of the theme, and sweep on into harmonies divine in their power and beauty.

The truth that music is for religion is equally evident in the fact that nothing calls for it like religion. Men fight better under the stir of music, but they can fight well without it. Business does not require

it. Pleasure craves it, but the voice and the zest of young life supply its lack. It is not needed in the enacting of laws, nor in the pleadings of courts. It might be left out in every department of life save one, and nothing would be radically altered; there would be lack, but not loss of function. But religion as an organized thing and as worship could not exist without it. When song dies out where men assemble for worship, the doors are soon closed. When praise is repressed and crowded aside for the sermon, the service sinks into a hard intellectual process for which men do not long care. Eloquence and logic will not take its place — why, it is difficult to say unless it is recognized that music is the main factor of worship — a fact capable of philosophical statement, namely: worship being a moral act or expression, it depends upon the rhythm and harmony of art for its materials; they are the substances — so to speak — ordained by God and provided in nature out of which worship is made. And so the Church in all ages has flowered into song. It takes for itself the noblest instrument and refuses none. It draws to itself the great composers whom it first attunes to its temper, and then sets to its tasks, which invariably prove to be their greatest works. In no other field do they work so willingly and with so full exercise of genius. There is a freedom, a fullness and perfection in sacred composition to be found in no other field. In all other music there is a call for more or for something different, but the music of adoration leaves the spirit in restful satisfaction. Dryden, the most tuneful of poets, divided the crown between old

Timotheus and the divine Cecilia, but surely it is greater to "draw an angel down" than "lift a mortal to the skies."

The fact that all religious conviction and feeling universally run to music for their full and final expression certainly must have some philosophical explanation. In rough and crude form it may be stated thus: music is the art-path to God in whom we live and move and have our being. We may get to God by many ways — by the silent communion of spirit with Spirit, by aspiration, by fidelity of service, but there is no path of *expression* so open and direct as that of music. The common remark that music takes us away from ourselves is philosophically true. When under its spell we transcend our ordinary thought and feeling, and are carried into another world; and if it be sacred music, that world is the world of the Spirit. When the spell ends and we come back to this present world, we do not cease to believe in that into which we were lifted. While there, lapped in its harmonies and soaring in its adorations, we felt how real that world is, and how surely it must at last be eternally realized. Towards that age of adoring harmony humanity is struggling, and into that upper world, where the discords of time and earth are resolved into tune, every earnest soul is steadily pressing.

Meanwhile we have some foretaste of —

> "That undisturbed song of pure concent,
> Aye sung before the sapphire-color'd throne
> To Him that sits thereon,
> With saintly shout, and solemn jubilee;

Where the bright seraphim, in burning row,
Their loud uplifted angel-trumpets blow;
And the cherubic host, in thousand quires,
Touch their immortal harps of golden wires;
With those just spirits that wear victorious palms,
Hymns devout and holy psalms
Singing everlastingly."

BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY
3 9999 09874 654 6